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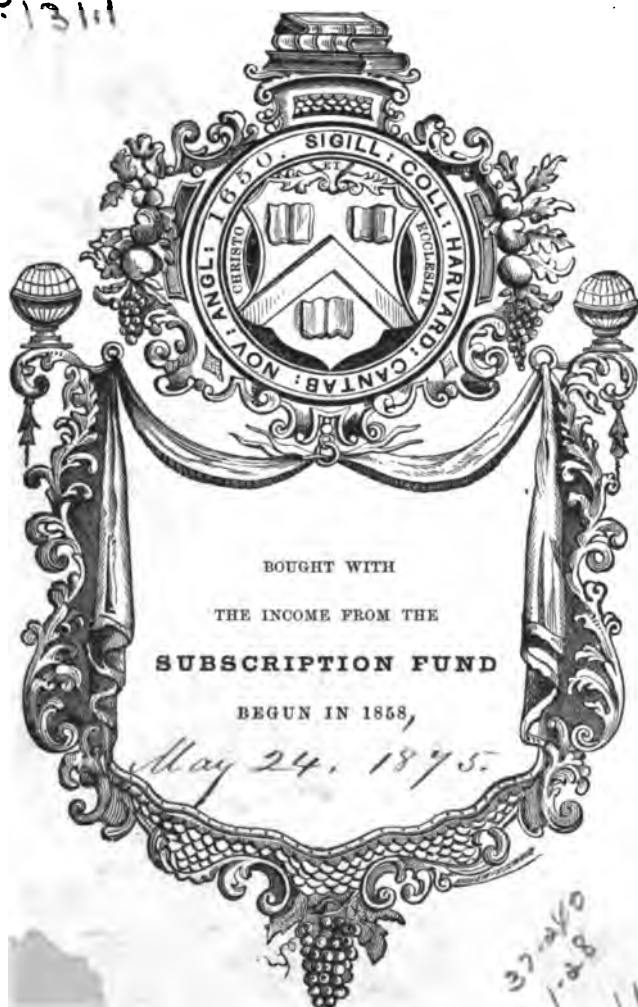
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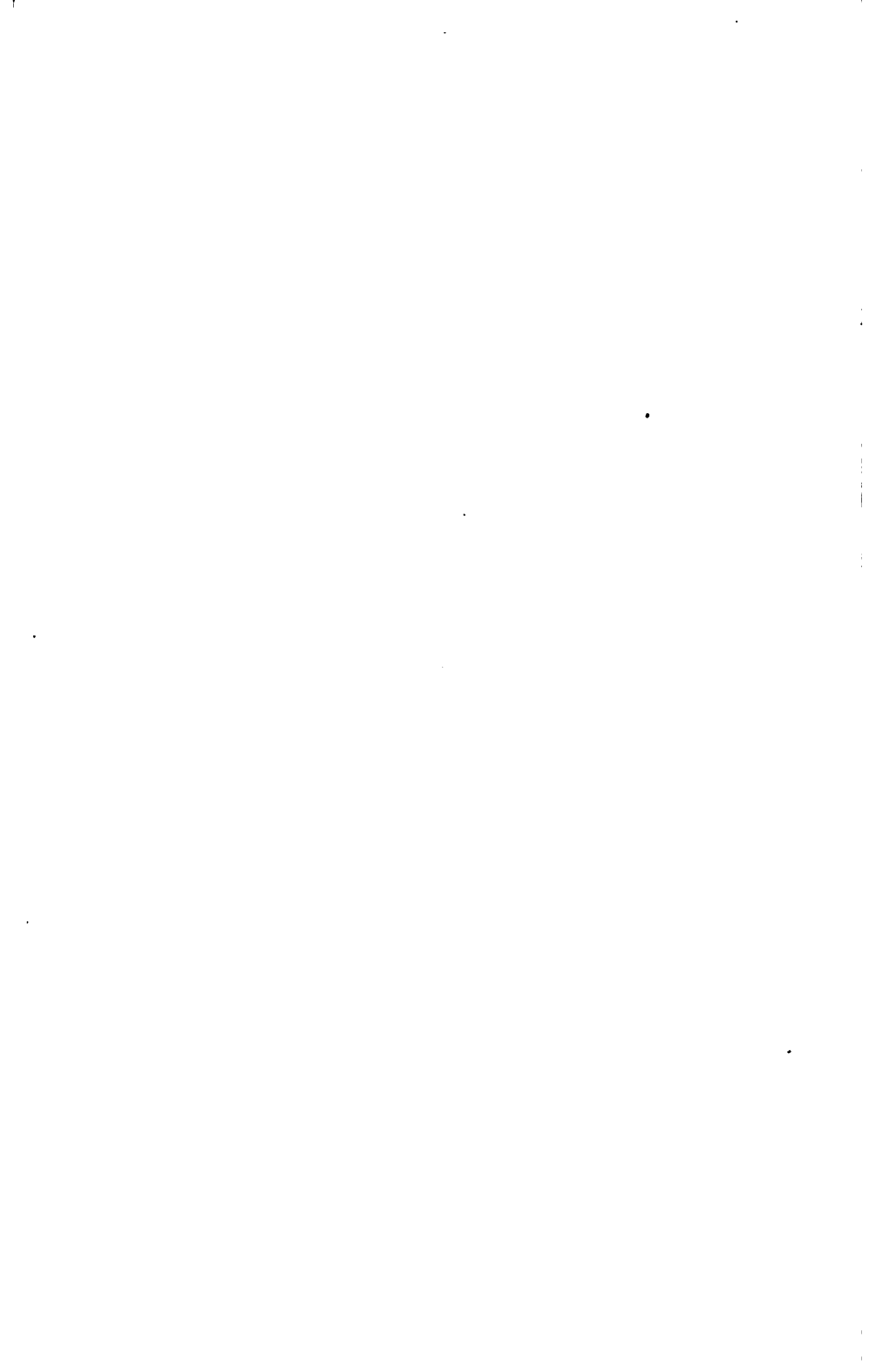
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CONTENTS.

EARL'S DENK—PART III,	1
THE FARMING AND PEASANTRY OF THE CONTINENT,	23
JOHN.—PART III,	40
LORD MAYO AND THE UMBALLA DURBAR,	61
LORD LYTTON'S COMEDY,	74
THE OPENING OF THE SUEZ CANAL,	85
MR FROUDE AND QUEEN MARY,	105
LORD BYRON AND HIS CALUMNIATORS,	123

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EARL'S DENE.—PART III.

BOOK I.—ANGÉLIQUE.

CHAPTER I.

It was a soft and fine June evening in the year 181—, so wonderfully soft and fine, indeed, that it was the very type of what an evening ought to be in that best of months. And yet, strange to say, although the inside of the coach that passed through Denethorp every day was full, there were no more than three of its passengers who preferred to closeness and confinement the sweetness and fragrance of the open air. Of these "outsides," one had come the whole distance from London, another had joined the coach some three or four stages off, and the third had mounted to his seat in the after part while the horses were being changed at Redchester. The latter was absorbed in conversation with the guard about the affairs of the road, the occupant of the box-seat was sound asleep, while the passenger who sat immediately behind was wrapped in a meditation that rendered him as blind to what lay to left and right as if his eyes also had been

closed. Presently, however, the sleeper slowly opened his, gave a good long stretching yawn, and then, having satisfied himself as to the point of the journey at which he and his fellow-passengers had arrived, turned round to take a survey of his temporary companions, in the course of which his eyes at once encountered those of his rear-rank man. The faces of both brightened into recognition as they exclaimed simultaneously,—

"Lester!"

"Warden! why, where do you fall from?"

Both were young men of nearly the same age, which was apparently about two-and-twenty, more or less; but, in every other respect, they were different enough.

The occupant of the box-seat—he who had been addressed as Lester—would at once, and under any circumstances, have been set down as an uncommonly good-looking fellow, not only by women, but by men also. Nor was he good-looking

only in the sense of having regular features, a healthy complexion, a good figure, and an exceedingly pleasant expression, but in the far more important sense of being firmly and strongly made, without any undue preponderance of one pair of limbs or of one set of muscles over another; in the sense of looking as though he could hold his own in all manly exercises that became a gentleman. Although he had been sleeping in an extremely cramped and uncomfortable position, yet, when he roused himself, he was wide awake at once; and the ring of his voice as he spoke seemed to show that he had fallen asleep not from weariness, but from the want of something better to do.

The other, whom he had called Warden, was also sufficiently good-looking, but after a far less healthy and less animal style. His features were far less regular, and his complexion far more pale; his lips were thinner and firmer, and his eyes more deeply set; and while the forehead of Lester was without a fold, his brow, less open, bore the presage of that kind of frown that is caused by the constant exercise of the brain. In point of figure, though there was about him no apparent want of bodily strength, those who have an eye for such matters would have said that whatever power he possessed was nervous rather than muscular; and he by no means shared with his acquaintance the signs of being practised in outdoor pursuits. In spite of their nearness to each other in point of age, there was much of the same sort of difference between them that is supposed to distinguish the townsman from the countryman, and the man who neglects the body for the sake of the mind, from him who neglects the mind for the sake of the body. And yet it is almost unfair to both of them to say this; for Lester, in spite of the regularity of his features, looked anything but empty or stupid—his eyes were too lively and his lips too

ready to smile for that; and Warden certainly did not look as though he had neglected exercise so much as to be without sufficient firmness of muscle for the ordinary needs of a man's life. Still, one was as plainly the young squire as the other was the student; and their voices, too, had this difference, that while Lester's was pleasant and essentially that of a gentleman, it was loud and unrestrained; and that Warden's, while it was clearer, better cultivated, and more subdued, was rather reserved in its tone, and was, besides, not free from a perceptible tinge of provincialism in its accent, though not more than just enough to make one suspect that the social position of the man himself was probably higher than that of his father and mother.

All these physical details were amply perceptible, for the evening was so warm that neither of the young men cared to encumber himself with more wrappings than were absolutely necessary. Indeed, by a moderately quick eye they might have been noted during the short pause that elapsed before Warden answered,—

"It is odd I did not recognise you when I got up. I joined the coach at Thurleigh. You are bound to Earl's Dene, I suppose?"

"Yes, I'm bound for the old place. Rather a bore, though, isn't it, just at this time of year of all others?"

"You come from town, then?"

"I should think so. Where else should a man be just now? I hope my aunt—I always call Miss Clare my aunt, you know—hasn't called me down for nothing. She's rather apt to, sometimes. I can't think what she could want to say to me that she couldn't write just as well. Where are you from? Cambridge? How long have you been down?"

"Only a day or two. I came nearly straight."

"And now I suppose you will make some stay in Denethorp? Well, you must come over, and

we'll have a day or two by the Gray together, or something. By the way, I have to congratulate you, haven't I?"

"Oh, about my fellowship? Thanks." He did not, however, give the thanks that he expressed so curtly the advantage of much warmth of manner. Perhaps he fancied that the congratulation had been offered a little too patronisingly; and certainly it had been spoken far too carelessly to suit the ears of one who had achieved a great and tangible success. It was natural for him to forget that, while to himself his brilliantly-won fellowship, the reward of three long years of hard and self-denying study, meant competence and honour for the present, and a sound and strong foundation on which to build the fabric of the future—to the heir of Earl's Dene it could seem nothing more than just a two or three hundred a-year that might be worth a man's taking if it came in his way, but was certainly not worth making fuss about.

"And don't you congratulate me too?" Lester asked in his turn.

There were plenty of things, Warden thought, on which his companion might reasonably be congratulated. But he said,—

"I would with pleasure, if I knew what upon. Not matrimony!" he added, with a smile.

"Ah, you think I've been caught in town? Not I. I was up to them, I flatter myself. No—I mean on their not having ploughed me, of course. We haven't met since then, have we? You know the odds were ten to one against the name Lester being in the list at all, and anything you please against my more than scraping through. But I suppose you wranglers and prizemen don't speculate on the chances of the 'poll.' Well, those weren't a bad three years of ours, were they? And yet somehow I was devilish glad when they were over. One did get enough at last of doing the same sort of things

over and over again." What would he have said, by the way, had his days been spent like the days of Warden? He might then, indeed, have had reason for his complaint—and yet very likely in that case he would not have made it. "And yet I was sorry too," he went on. "Holloa! here we are at Graylford. Just let me feel the ribbons, Tom. I'll just run you down to the last corner before the bridge. Madam wouldn't like me to drive up to the gates, I suppose." The coachman resigned his throne with a confidence that he certainly would not have shown had he not known his man. "That's it, Tom—and now for a bit of a spirt."

While, guided by the skilful hand of Hugh Lester, the four horses launched out into a fast canter along the smooth and level high-road, Warden, for a few instants, resigned himself to the full enjoyment of that most delightful of all forms of rapid motion of which the now more than half-forgotten pleasures have been too often and too well described to need farther description here. Neither by temperament nor by habit, however, was he capable, for any length of time together, of holding fast the delight of merging self-consciousness and the sense of personal existence in simple physical enjoyment. Besides, he was tired with his journey, for he had been travelling many hours before he joined the coach; and when he had chanced to fall asleep, his slumber had not been so dreamless and so refreshing as that of Lester. He had, too, been rather overworking his brain of late, under the strain of recent competition, so that his nerves were not in the best imaginable order. The result was that, as each spring of the horses brought him nearer and nearer to his home at Denethorp, his mind indulged more and more in those groundless fancies and presentiments that are so familiar to all who return home after a long absence, especially in cases where

correspondence has been unfrequent and fragmentary ; groundless fancies and ridiculous presentiments of evil which he who indulges them will not own, even to himself, but which are none the less real and none the less disagreeable for all their groundlessness and all their absurdity. There is a kind of half-formed idea lurking in the breasts of even the least vain among us, that somehow, in our absence, the things and the people that we care about are more likely to go wrong than right ; and the excitement of seeing our home and our friends once more is very often due less to our affection for them than to a causeless fear of finding, say, our house burnt to the ground, our children laid up with scarlet fever, our servants absconded with the plate, a heap of letters waiting for an answer, and, according to our sex, our wife eloped, or our husband smoking in the drawing-room. It is true that Warden had no children, no plate, and no correspondence ; but, in such a case, fancy can find plenty of food on which to feed without any assistance from facts. And then, too, he could not help being vexed with himself that he, a high wrangler, a prizeman, and Chancellor's medalist of his year, and now a Fellow of his College—that he, who had become a sort of lion in his own set, and had thereby come to feel as though he had already done something and become somebody in the world—that he, who was all this and had done all this, and who was expected by all his friends, as well as by himself, to be and to do a very great deal more in a few years' time—should have, somehow or other, been forced to feel now that he had not been able to meet, on at least terms of equality, a man like Lester, upon whom, with all the vanity of his age, he thought himself entitled to look down as from an infinite height of intellectual superiority. He was naturally imbued with the common and intelligible

but profoundly dangerous and often fatal error, that mental superiority is worth more than a single straw in the ordinary social intercourse between man and man ; an error to which, whatever the case may be now, clever and successful university men used at all events to be peculiarly liable, and from which, unless they afterwards mixed freely and largely with various classes of society, they were very often unable to shake themselves free. Warden was now, in fact, receiving his first lesson in this matter. At every step of the road that took him farther from Cambridge and nearer to Denethorp, his superiority to Lester seemed to fade away more and more rapidly, while the only distinction between them that would be recognised in the county became distinct in proportion. He could not help being aware that he was becoming once more degraded to the position that belonged to him in his native town as the son of an obscure and struggling country doctor, while Lester, in a like manner, was rising to his full rank as heir of Earl's Dene. The utterly different kind of life necessarily led by the two while both were at Cambridge, and their different social station even there, had not allowed their slight acquaintance to develop into anything more than slight acquaintance ; so that no habits of familiar intercourse had tended to bridge over this old gap between them, which seemed to Warden's eyes to be wider than ever, now that he was of an age and in a position to perceive more clearly its breadth and its nature. Indeed to a certain extent this feeling of his was altogether new. In the old times he had always, like the rest of the world of Denethorp, been ready enough to pay all due deference to the young squire, whose occasional kindly notice he had been proud to receive ; but that was while he was as yet nothing but the struggling student, with his way in life yet to begin. Now, on the contrary, he

could not persuade himself that it was becoming on the part of the successful student, with a future of infinite possibilities opening before him, to accept with the same kind of deference the patronage of his intellectual inferior; and so he felt inclined to be angry with himself for not being able to assert his equality, and for having, from force of old habit, relapsed against his will into his old way of regarding the local supremacy of the Clares and all that belonged to them.

In spite, however, of this vague disquietude of spirit, still the smooth rapidity of the pace, his fatigue, the aimless wandering of his thoughts, and the warm stillness of the air, had nearly succeeded in sending him to sleep in reality when the bugle of the guard sounded, as was the invariable practice when the mail arrived within sight of the long and magnificent avenue of beech-trees that led up through the park from the highroad. Lester rapidly gave up the reins to their rightful holder, and once more sank to the level of a mere passenger.

"That was a pretty fair run, wasn't it, Warden?" he asked, as he began to collect his coats, sticks, and other miscellaneous small articles preparatory to leaving the coach. "Well, old fellow, as I suppose we are to be neighbours for some days, at any rate—how long do you stay at Denethorp?"

"I don't know quite what my movements are for the present, but I don't suppose I shall be off again in a very great hurry."

"How do you think of spending the Long? I beg its pardon: one must say the autumn, now we have both done with longs and shorts?"

"But I have not done with longs and shorts. I shall be up again next term, I expect. I have got a pupil or two, you know; and I have some idea of getting some men to read with in the Long."

"By Jove! then I have a first-rate notion. Bring your men down

here, if they're decent fellows—it's quiet enough. Only mind you get a decent team, and I'll do what I can for them, you know. You shall coach them in Homer and Euclid and all that, and I'll see after their other lines and angles. You can't say I'm a bad coach, after that spirit. Tom, here, shall give me a testimonial. But here we are. I'm always glad to look up the beeches again, though it is a bore to come down just now. Good-bye, Warden—we'll see how the trout lie before many hours are over. So look me up."

"You're very good—I shall be delighted. Good-bye."

By this time the coach had stopped at the great iron gates that were flanked by the lodge, and that bore above them the arms of the Clares, with their motto, "*Non solum nomine clarus*." The old woman who acted as portress had run out on hearing the first blast of the bugle, and now stood with a broad smile of welcome on her face to receive the young squire. In a few seconds more, the horses, freed from the very respectable weight of Lester and his trappings, were again on their way.

Almost as soon as he was left to himself, Warden forgot the shy constraint that the other's presence had caused; and his mind, relieved from the incubus of Earl's Dene and its belongings, soon began to busy itself about more real and personal matters, while his eyes were occupied with recognising each particular point of the road which he had not travelled for so long; but, as will be remembered, the remainder of the journey was extremely short in respect of both time and distance. Indeed the tower of Denethorp Church was plainly visible, and when the wind was in the right quarter, its peal of bells was often audible, from the lodge-gate; and so, in a very little while, he in his turn was descending from his seat at the door of the King's Head, and looking at

his own not very heavy amount of luggage. Then, leaving his portmanteau to be sent after him from the inn, the new Fellow of St Margaret's walked across the marketplace and down one of the principal

streets until he came to a brick house standing in a small garden at the edge of the town, the door of which bore a tarnished brass plate inscribed with the name of Mr Warden, surgeon.

CHAPTER II.

To return, however, to him who was certainly the more important personage of the two in the eyes of the world, if not in those of his travelling companion.

The traveller whose destination happened to be Earl's Dene would, in those days—and, for that matter, in these days also—pass through the iron gates already mentioned, and then proceed three quarters of a mile, more or less, along the magnificent avenue, having on his left hand an enclosure called the Lodge Park, which was well stocked with deer, that have not, even now, had to yield their old domain to a more useful if less picturesque generation of sheep, until he arrived at the lawn and circular carriage-drive in front of the house itself. This was a plain square building of dark-red brick, pierced with many windows symmetrically arranged in even rows, and altogether of a far more modern appearance than the park and grounds would have led one to expect. The fact is that, while the park is of great antiquity, the house is not older than the hideous reign of George the Second, and bears conspicuously upon its face the date of the memorable year of 1746. It had been built as a substitute for some ruinous ecclesiastical buildings that had cumbered the ground ever since the dissolution of the monasteries. For Earl's Dene had of old been called Abbot's Dene, and had been a sort of offshoot of the great Abbey of Redchester, in the same county, until King Henry made a grant of it to the then Earl of Wendale. Of course, like most of the monastic

estates that underwent this fate, its ownership was long looked upon as of necessity associated with the punishment appointed for the sin of sacrilege; and there was a prophetic jingle about it, of which the usual form ran thus:—

“Abbot's, King's, and Earl's Dene,
Never thrice the same again;”

which is, indeed, rather obscure, but means, according to traditional interpretation, that no family should ever be able to hold it farther than from father to son—that is to say, for more than two generations. As is usual in such cases, for reasons sufficiently familiar to students of popular superstition, the prophecy was always singularly fulfilled to the letter; but inasmuch as the saying was supposed to be of the nature of a curse, and to prognosticate evil, it had been anything but fulfilled to the spirit. The possessors of Earl's Dene invariably prospered. From the great Earl of Wendale, the original grantee, it passed in due course, when the title became extinct for want of issue male, to his granddaughter, who made a rich and advantageous marriage. From her it again came to a granddaughter; and her grandson changed his name in order to inherit another great estate in another part of England. One more lapse into the female line brought it into the possession of the grandmother, and then of the father, of Madam Clara. Before her grandmother's time the place had been uninhabited and neglected, its owners having always possessed other seats in better repair elsewhere; but Miss Langton, not being in this

position, came to live there soon after her marriage ; and it was by her and her husband, Colonel Clare, that the present plain but comfortable and convenient house was built. It was by them also that, to the eternal sorrow of antiquaries, the monastic ruins were entirely removed, so that there is scarce left of them so much as a trace to mark the ground on which they once stood.

While Warden was traversing the short distance that lay between Earl's Dene and Denethorp, Lester strolled quietly along the avenue towards the house, wondering what could possibly be the meaning of this sudden and unwelcome summons from Miss Clare—his aunt, as he always called her, although she was really his cousin. In no long time, in spite of his leisurely pace, he had crossed the lawn, passed through the hall, and reached the drawing-room, where Madam Clare, to give her her popular title, was seated in a large arm-chair reading, or sleeping, or both, or neither.

Nothing is so difficult, or rather so impossible, as to say of a man or woman that he or she is absolutely young or old. Youth and age are essentially relative terms. Twenty years are not seldom in reality more than eighty—eighty less than twenty. To resort, however, to the device of calling a person middle-aged is as meaningless a makeshift as to use the term *mezzo-soprano* to describe a voice. It does not in the least say what the person is—it only means that it is impossible to say what he is. Now, about half-way between fifty and sixty is not a great age ; and yet Miss Clare certainly looked, and therefore was, old ; for a really young woman, whatever the number of her years may be, never looks old. She was tall, and of a commanding although not upright figure, which was large, but not full ; her features, still handsome, were prominent and strongly mark-

ed, and wore when, as they were now, in repose, an expression made up of sadness and severity. Her dark eyes had grown dull, and her hair grey. Her complexion was fair, but—what is seldom the case with fair complexions—inclined to be sallow. Her dress was plain, but of costly work and material, the prevailing colour of it being that of lavender. As she rose from her chair to greet her self-styled nephew, and held out to him her white and delicate hand—that only part of a woman that is superior to the effects of time and sorrow—she gave the threefold impression of being a woman who had lived, who had thought, and who was rather to be feared. But this was by no means the only part of her expression, and certainly not the most pleasant part of it. When she spoke, her face wonderfully lighted up, and its signs of sorrow and severity were lost in a kind and almost gentle smile, which went far to prove her to be young, after all, and that the contrast between her and Lester was to be measured by a standard, not of age, but of power.

"I am glad to see you, Hugh," she said, in a voice that was grave and pleasant, but rather of the kind that women acquire together with their Italian caligraphy, and which is too conventional, too lady-like, in fact, to express much character.

"I hope there is nothing wrong, aunt, that you called me down ?"

"Oh no ; but we'll talk of that presently. I suppose you're hungry ?"

"I certainly shan't be sorry to get something to eat. You are better, I hope ?"

"As well as I can expect to be now. I have been out several times lately. But now, go and have your dinner. I had mine early, as usual. I have no doubt you will find it all ready for you. You will find me here when you have done. By the way, I have a visitor staying with me."

"Indeed! Any one I know?"

"Well, you do and you don't."

"That sounds mysterious, aunt. Is it male or female?"

"For shame, Hugh. It is Miss Raymond, of New Court."

"What! Alice? By Jove! I wonder what she's turned out. She ought to be nice, from what I remember when I was a boy."

Miss Clare smiled. "That is so very long ago, is it not? But you shall see and judge for yourself when you have had your dinner. I like her very much, but of course that is no reason that you will. Old ladies and young gentlemen don't always agree about those things. Now go and get your dinner."

"How is it she's here? I thought she was out of England."

"So she was, till very lately. But she has come back, and, of course, wanted to look at her own place—her old home, poor girl; so I asked her to stay with me. But now, do go and get your dinner. Miss Raymond will not run away; and, besides, I have something to say to you before I introduce you to your old acquaintance."

But Hugh, hungry as he was, instead of just washing his hands and sitting down at once to the good things provided for him, went to his own room and made a regular evening toilette. He might, he thought, appear before the visitor to the best advantage while he was about it.

At last, however, having amply satisfied his hunger and thirst, he returned to the drawing-room. But Miss Clare was still by herself; so he sat down near her, and disposed himself to listen dutifully to what she had to say.

"You know there's to be a general election, Hugh?"

"I should think so. Nobody is talking of anything else."

"Well, there's to be an opposition in Denethorp."

"In Denethorp! Surely not?"

Well might Hugh Lester stare at

the idea of an opposition to Madam Clare in her own town.

"It is only too true," she said.

"But it can't be serious?—it can't succeed?"

"Hugh, the fact is that things are not what they used to be. One can't help seeing it, even here."

"But who would venture ——"

"It is these mill people. Just look at this, and guess where I found it."

She handed him a tract, at which he looked with a puzzled air.

"What is all this, aunt? Is this the 'twopenny trash' that people talk of?"

"You see what it is. But you would never think I found it, not in the hands of a mechanic, but actually in one of my own cottages. You see how this rank poison is spreading. There is a cry of turning out the 'Tory nominee,' as they call our member; and they have set up what they call a Hampden Club under our very eyes."

"But these men are not the voters."

"And in other ways the town is changed. The mills have become a power in the place; and it is that that is at the bottom of it all."

"But who have they got to stand? There's no one in the county——"

"Oh, a man from London—some friend of Sir Francis Burdett and Lord Cochrane, no doubt. But he has money, and that's what they want."

"Do you know who it is?"

"His name is Prescott, they say."

"The devil it is!—I beg your pardon, aunt."

"Do you know anything of him, then?"

"I should think so. He's a great man with all that lot—as well known as any one in town. He's a banker, and as rich as a Jew. He's an awful rascal, I fancy, but tremendously good-looking; and he can talk, too, they say. By Jove! every woman in the place

will turn Whig as soon as he's been an hour in it, if all's true I hear. Poor old Tom won't have a chance."

Now "poor old Tom" was a certain Captain Johnston, a harmless old gentleman, who had represented the Clares in Parliament for the last thirty years—who was, in fact, the objectionable "Tory nominee."

"That is just what I think too. I feel that Captain Johnston will be no use to stand a serious contest. And so what I wanted to say to you is, that you must come forward yourself."

"My dear aunt!"

"You are of age, you know."

"Why, Prescott would thrash me worse than Johnston."

"Not at all. You are a Clare, you know, in all but the name, and master of Earl's Dene."

This was not bad reasoning. The electors of Denethorp might object to be any longer represented by a "warming-pan," as the phrase is; but the heir of Earl's Dene was their representative by nature. Hugh felt the force of the argument at once. He certainly did not enter into Miss Clare's views as to his candidature with much enthusiasm; for he feared, and not without reason, according to common experience, that being in the House would probably be more troublesome than pleasant, and he was not ambitious. But still he did not for a moment dream of combating them. Whatever his private inclinations might be, supposing that he was capable of considering the matter as presenting an alternative, he would feel himself bound, as a gentleman, to do whatever might be expected of him as the future head of a great county family, and as one of the Clares of Earl's Dene. "*Noblesse oblige*." Every great house has its traditions, which are respected and accepted by its own county, and must be respected and accepted by itself: which, when broken through by some degenerate member of it, crush

the apostate with their fragments. The heir of Earl's Dene was far too sensible—if such a word can be used to express what was in reality the result of instinct—not to observe to the full the traditional policy of his family in every essential particular. It would have seemed to him to be treason to act otherwise. And so he submitted to become the candidate for Denethorp with the best grace in the world, and without farther protest—with the same readiness to do what he could to win, and with the same zeal for his side that he was in the habit of bringing to bear upon more congenial contests.

"And now you see," said Miss Clare, "why I sent for you so suddenly. No time must be lost. Captain Johnston's address is out already, to say he does not mean to stand, and your own is prepared. You must ride over to Denethorp to-morrow and talk to White."

"What does White think of things?"

"Well, he always speaks candidly to me, and he is not sanguine. But I am. We *must* not be beat, Hugh."

"And we won't, aunt—not if I can help it."

"That's right, Hugh. Pluck—I like the word—must win; and no Clare, or Lester either, has ever wanted that." She sighed, however, as she made her boast.

"I fear it will be pluck against pluck, though, and money against money."

"Then blood will tell."

"But, from what you say, London is making itself felt in the place; and there, blood doesn't seem to tell much."

"My dear boy, Earl's Dene will always be as good as London in Denethorp, which is in——shire, and not in Middlesex."

"Well, I will see White to-morrow, by all means. And don't fear that I won't do all I know."

"Not fearing that, I fear nothing."

"I wish I could speak like Prescott, though."

"Much best not. The best orator is, after all, the man who says nothing but what is in him; and that can always be said in a very few words. You will speak well enough; and, indeed, I think that a gentleman should not speak too well. Speeches are the weapons of demagogues, which a gentleman should scorn. No—I should no

more like to see you the match of a man like Mr Prescott, than I should like to think you could use your fists like a prize-fighter. Tomorrow you shall tell me all the London news. Now I will introduce you to Miss Raymond. She has been taking a turn on the terrace while I was talking to you. No—don't move; I would rather call her myself."

CHAPTER III.

Hugh rose from his seat, and passed his fingers through his hair.

Miss Raymond entered the drawing-room through the glass door that opened upon the terrace; and her old playmate saw at once that his presentiment had turned out to be right, and that she had turned out something very nice indeed.

But descriptions of people, though they are to a certain extent unavoidable, are always tedious, and never quite satisfactory. No one ever learned to know a person from the best description. And yet, on the other hand, without some amount of personal description, character would be unintelligible altogether. Fortunately, however, Miss Raymond belonged to a large and easily described type. She was young—just of age, according to Miss Clare—and with her tall but well-developed and graceful figure, bright, but not too clear complexion, grey hazel eyes, brown hair, and regular, but not too regular, features; and, best of all, with her bright and open expression and ready smile,—was in appearance all that a young English girl ought to be, and still is sometimes. It need only be added that one who was not an amateur of this style of beauty might, with some reason, have asked for a little more warmth and richness, in expression as well as in colouring. But this is a matter wholly of individual taste. After all, if freshness and purity suggest coldness, it only follows

that a certain amount of coldness is not to be despised. It is absurd to quarrel with England, because it has not at the same time both green fields and a southern sun.

"I hope your solitary stroll has not tired you," said Miss Clare. "Let me introduce my nephew to you—Hugh, you know."

"I hope Miss Raymond will not need an introduction," said the latter, politely. "I can assure you, Miss Raymond, that I have not forgotten our old acquaintance, which is, after all, not so excessively old."

"Nor have I—and I am delighted to renew it." She had a very sweet voice, with an honest ring about it, as though she used it only to say the whole of what she meant, and never a word less or more.

"And I hope it will not be interrupted for so long again. You have been a great traveller, I hear?"

"Enough at all events to be glad to be home again."

"Which, after all, is the great use of travel, is it not?" said Miss Clare.

And so the three dropped into a pleasant ordinary sort of chat, in which, however, Miss Clare did little but listen. Her nephew—he may as well be called what he was called by everybody—and her guest found plenty to say to one another, for neither was of a silent nature; and Hugh passed altogether a very much more lively evening than he had expected, for, with his out-of-

door nature, he could not help finding his aunt's quiet and usually solitary evenings a little wearisome. If he had to give up the rest of the London season, as now seemed probable, the presence of the young lady, he thought, would render his canvases much less dull, especially as she had declared herself to be passionately fond of riding. She was now, he learned, living in London with a distant relation who had been one of her guardians during her minority; but that she hated town—so she said, at least—and fully intended that New Court, of which she was mistress in her own right, should for the future see a great deal of her. Altogether their tastes seemed to match in a most remarkable manner, except with regard to the pleasures of town. Even had he not seen that she was something much better, he would have given her a high place in his good opinion, as “a girl with no nonsense about her.”

Was Miss Clare a match-maker? It was not her way to do anything unusual without some definite purpose, and the presence of a guest at Earl's Dene was something very unusual. But Hugh was not given to speculation; and it can only be said that, if she had any plan in her head about him and Alice Raymond, and if she succeeded in carrying it out, it would be all the better for Hugh. Wives like the mistress of New Court are not found every day—no, nor often twice in a lifetime, seeing that she was young, pretty, amiable, lively, accomplished, of good birth, rich, with no relations, and completely mistress of herself and of her purse. But this by the way.

At last the evening drew to a close, and the two ladies retired, leaving Hugh to stroll about and enjoy his cigar in the pleasant night air; for, since he had been in London, he had fallen into a habit of crowning the day in a manner which was by no means universal in times when a pipe was almost the brand

of a sot, and a cigar of a rake. It is probable that Madam Clare was ignorant of this habit of his, for she had never mentioned it to him, and it is very certain that she would have objected to so foreign an innovation most strongly.

In spite of his long conversation with his aunt upon the subject, his head was by no means overflowing with politics as he enjoyed this gift of a Peninsular friend of his. He was in that pleasant frame of mind that is caused by the influence of a good dinner, a pleasant evening, bodily fatigue, and the exchange of the noise of town for country quietness. Earl's Dene was simply the quietest place in the whole world—just fit, in fact, to be the dwelling-place of the very old and the very young; and though its heir was not of an age to appreciate perfect repose for long together, still there is no time of life at which a sudden plunge into a bath of silence is not refreshing, and, for a few hours, the most delightful thing in the world. And so he found it, while, in that most pleasant of all mental conditions which is called thinking of nothing, he looked from the terrace over the broad green park, over the spire of the little church of Graylford, over the silver Grayl itself, now in the moonlight more silver than ever, and over the tall woods, which had but just exchanged the green of spring for that of summer, to the low, faintly purple hills that marked the border of the Wold country.

While thus engaged, one of Miss Clare's keepers came up to him.

“Glad to see you down here again, sir,” he said, touching his cap.

“I'm always glad to be down here, Roberts,” he answered, with the inconsistency of honesty. “And how are things doing?”

“Oh, sir, pretty fairish. Not much doing though, sir.”

“No, I suppose not. I expect

you've all of you been lazy enough since I was here last."

"Well sir, there's mostly things to be done. But you see, Mr Hugh, June isn't September."

"And you wish it was, no doubt?"

"No, sir. I takes things as they be, and they mostly comes pretty right, take 'em all in all."

"I don't know about that, Roberts. I should like to think when I go to bed to-night that one was going to have a fling at the birds in the morning."

"Well, sir, maybe you're right. But I don't know—maybe September wouldn't come so pleasant if June didn't come once a-year or so. And how do you find madam, sir?"

"Well, she doesn't seem complaining."

"I be glad of that, Mr Hugh. But you see your being here cheers her up a bit like. I be feared she do find it but dull when you're up and gone. All on us do that, sir."

"Then I must stay as long as I can, for your sakes."

"I hope you will, sir. But if you ben't too busy, just now, Mr Hugh—"

"I don't look so, do I?"

"Well, sir, there be something I wanted to mention."

"What is it?"

"Why you see, sir, madam be main special about things, and don't like folk coming all nohow into the place, special just now, among the does, you know, sir: and I have to look after 'em. And she be right, too, sir, what with all them hands out of the town, and such—"

"Well?"

"Well, sir, most all mornings, ever since they be got fine, when I be down past the Lodge Park, where the does be, I see a young lady—leastwise a young 'oman, sir, though I don't say as she ben't a young lady—"

"Really? This is interesting."

"Yes, sir, it be. Well, Mr Hugh,

this young lady—for I be nigh sure she be a lady—gets over the rails of the Lodge Park, sir, right amid the does—"

"She can't be very careful of her clothes, then, unless the fence has been mended."

"Nor of the does, sir. Well, of course that frights the things a bit, not knowing of her as they knows me—"

"Well?"

"Well, sir, that be all."

"It doesn't seem to me to be so very alarming. Why don't you speak to her, or to Miss Clare? I suppose she's not a mill-hand, as you call her a young lady?"

"I'd ha' spoke to her pretty sharp, if she'd been that. And you see, sir, as how madam be rather put about, just now, what with the doctors and the 'lection lawyers: and then she don't like to be vexed with things; she'd say as 'twere my work to look after the does—"

"And after the young ladies?"

"Yes, sir. And I didn't like to speak to the young lady without just asking a word—she might be a town lady, sir; and, as 'lection time be nigh—"

Hugh laughed. "I see," he said: "go on."

"It might get set about, sir, as how one of madam's men had unbehaved to a Denethorp lady, and then madam might blow me up for it. And so I thought as I'd best wait till you was come down, sir; for, says I, if anybody knows what to do in a case, it be just Mr Hugh."

"I don't know about that, Roberts. Young ladies are sometimes hard cases to tackle. But you have done quite rightly. What does she do in the Lodge Park? Walk there? I should have thought she could have found a better place for a morning walk than there, especially as she has to scramble over the rails. Is she young, did you say?"

"She be youngish; but I don't think she have got a sweetheart—I'd ha' soon spoke up to him."

"I've no doubt you would."

"And what she does, sir, I can't say, as I can't make out, like."

"What time does she go?"

"Early, sir—about seven, most days; some days before."

"Well, Roberts, you have done quite right in waiting to see me. I'd best speak myself to my aunt—or, better still, to the young lady herself—why not? I'll get up to-morrow on purpose. Where does she get over?"

"Just by the big beech, sir."

"I know. You'll just keep out of the way——"

"All right, Mr Hugh."

"And, if she comes, I'll manage matters."

"Take care if she be a Denethorp lady, sir."

"All right. I shall certainly take care not to offend the most influential half of my future constituents. By Jove! I'll remember that: it'll make a capital tag to a speech. Prescott himself couldn't have put it better."

"And the does, Mr Hugh?"

"Shall be driven no more."

"Thank you, sir. And I hope I did right, sir?"

"Quite. You have shown yourself to be a man of both gallantry and discretion."

"Yes, sir. Is there anything I can do?"

"No, I don't think there is. By the way, I think of trying for a trout or two to-morrow, after I've been over in the town. Perhaps young Mr Warden might come over. How's the brook?"

"First-rate, sir."

"Then come to me before breakfast to-morrow, and we'll talk about it.—Well," continued Hugh to himself, "if I'm to take Roberts's place in watching the does to-morrow morning, and have to be at the big beech by seven—by Jove! It sounds like a *rendezvous*. I must turn in forthwith."

But he did not turn in forthwith; for he lighted another cigar, and did not leave the terrace for a good hour longer. If Miss Raymond could have read his thoughts just then, she would have felt flattered: nor would he have been the reverse of flattered could he have read hers.

CHAPTER IV.

Nevertheless, however much he may have thought about Miss Raymond, and dreamed of her afterwards—supposing so admirable a sleeper to have dreamed about anything at all—he was not a little amused and interested by his prospective adventure, slight as it was; and he rose in excellent time for arriving at the great beech by seven o'clock.

Before getting up, however, he took care to learn what sort of weather it was, with a strong hope that it would prove to be raining cats and dogs, or at least that it would be such as to furnish him with an excuse for putting off the matter to another day; for early rising was not one of his habits, particularly after a journey. How-

ever, he was doomed to disappointment. The sun was shining brightly, and the air was both fresh and warm. So he turned out heroically, and found himself all the better for having made the exertion.

But, setting aside the difficulties of getting out of bed, there are many other things that seem easy enough the night before, but wear a very different aspect next morning, when they have actually to be done. Last night the matter seemed trivial and easy enough; but, in cold blood, and before breakfast, too, to have to tell a young lady that she is trespassing, and to warn her off, was not an agreeable errand for one who had begun to pique himself upon his politeness to women. Hugh hoped, in that corner

of his heart where, in spite of his easy manners, he still hoarded a plentiful stock of shyness, that the young lady might prove to be neither a lady nor young. That she might turn out to be pretty he neither hoped nor feared. He did not hope it, because Denethorp was by no means rich in pretty girls at that period of its history; and his shyness was certainly not so great as to make him afraid of looking at a pretty face. He ran over in his mind the whole list of people in which the mysterious trespasser could possibly be included. Not the parson's wife, or any of his daughters—they were not likely to be walking all the way to Earl's Dene—a distance of full four miles—to gather dew in solitude. Nor for that matter were the wives or daughters of any one in Denethorp with whom he was in the least acquainted. So he was driven to conclude that it must be some tradesman's daughter who had caught some of the prevailing taste of the day for sentimental eccentricity, or else had formed exaggerated ideas as to the value of the morning air as a cosmetic. The notion that she might meet a lover there he dismissed from his mind at once; for however women may be constituted in such matters, reason and experience alike told him that to suppose for a moment that any man could possibly be so much in love as to get up at six o'clock morning after morning to carry on a courtship in the long damp grass of the Lodge Park, with the certainty of catching cold, and the strong chance of being punished as a trespasser, was to suppose a gross absurdity. So, at least, he thought in his youthful cynicism. A better reason for his conclusion was, that Roberts, whose eyes were pretty sharp, had been of the same opinion.

In order, therefore, to satisfy his curiosity before proceeding to action, he took up a position from which, without being himself seen, he had a clear view of the great

beech, whose arms, spreading well over the paling of the Lodge Park, afforded a favourite shelter for the persecuted does.

He had not long to wait. Scarcely had he lighted a cigar, when, sure enough, he saw approaching along the line of trees that led from the main avenue to the beech in which they ended, a figure which was as plainly young as it was that of a lady. He had a full view of her very soon, and plenty of time to observe her as she came towards the tree.

What he saw was nothing very much, after all. It was only a small, slight figure, dressed in dark stuff, the colour of which matched a complexion into which the morning air and exercise had brought a little more freshness than was apparently habitual to it; a face remarkable for little but a thoughtful but pleasant smile; and brown hair gathered away under a shabby hat. She carried something in her hand that looked like a book.

Hugh waited until she reached the tree, and, raising herself lightly and gracefully upon a swelling of the round bole near the root, had shown an evident intention of placing the paling between herself and the turf of the avenue. Then, thinking it high time to enter upon the scene before she had succeeded in placing herself in the awkward position of being caught in the very act of climbing over—awkward not only morally, but physically—and politely denying himself the chance of thus seeing the turn of her ankle—he left his place of half-concealment, and, advancing towards her in such a manner as not to take her by surprise, he raised his hat, threw away his cigar, and said, stupidly enough—for, having made up his mind as he came along as to what he ought to say, he of course did not say it,—

“I am exceedingly sorry—but—Miss Clare is very particular about the deer not being driven; and so—just now—”

The culprit, thus caught red-handed, as it were, turned round suddenly; and, finding herself addressed by one who was so evidently a gentleman as Hugh Lester, and who was so evidently desirous, if he only knew how, of treating her politely, blushed slightly, as she answered—forgetting, however, to step down again upon the turf—in an accent that was neither of Denethorp nor of any place in England,—

“Am I doing wrong, sir?”

The “sir” grated upon his ears a little; it was not as “good style” as the rest of her manner and appearance. But the voice in which the objectionable word had been uttered was altogether superior to style.

“Oh, not at all; but, as I said, my aunt—Miss Clare, that is—is very particular about not allowing any one in the Lodge Park; and though I have no doubt she would make an exception in your case, still, you understand—at least, I hope you see—that—I am very sorry to have interrupted your walk.” Lame and impotent conclusion!

The Lady, naïvely.—“I am very sorry too; but if Miss Clare does not permit it, of course I must not go there. Of course I did not know I was doing wrong.”

Lester.—“Nor were you—that is—but, after all, the Lodge Park is not the pleasantest part of the place, and there can be no objection to your going everywhere else as much and as often as you please. And so I have not confined your walk so very much. I hope you will not let me think I have offended you by avoiding Earl's Dene, or I should be sorry indeed.”

The Lady, rather stiffly.—“Thank you. You are very kind, and I am certainly not offended.”

Lester, seeing that he had made a blunder in the form of his last speech.—“I am glad of that. I was afraid you might think you had not been treated very courteously.”

The Lady, descending from her perch, and, after a short pause, during which she had been considering.—“Pray do not mention it. It is I who ought to apologise. But as I have been here a good many mornings now, of course I thought there was no harm.”

Another pause. Then,—

The Lady, with a sudden frankness, and as though her mind was quite made up.—“I should only have come once or twice more.”

Lester.—“Might I ask if you have any special purpose, then, for wishing to come here? If so, no doubt Miss Clare would give you permission willingly.”

The Lady.—“Yes; and I should certainly like to be able to come once or twice again.” *Lester* waited for her to explain. “In fact it was the deer that tempted me.”

Lester, mystified.—“The deer?”

The Lady.—“Yes; to study them.”

Lester.—“Ah, I see. You are an artist, then?”

The Lady.—“I am a learner.”

Lester.—“Then I beg your pardon more than ever. I know Miss Clare would be only too happy to let you sketch her deer.”

The Lady, evidently not intending to let her chance slip.—“I should be so glad! But she might not like it; and—”

Lester.—“Oh, she would be sure to make no objection. On the contrary, she would feel flattered. But I cannot give you leave myself. I must speak to her first—”

The Lady.—“Of course. But I hope you will not put yourself to any trouble on my account—”

Lester.—“It would be no trouble at all. How could it be? Let me see—I will speak to Miss Clare to-day; but how can I let you know her answer? But it would be sure to be all right; and you could come here to-morrow, if you like, very safely.”

The Lady.—“I should not like to, without knowing.”

Lester, struck by a good thought.

—"Then she or I could write you a note. You would get it to-day, if you live at Denethorp, as I suppose you do; so, if you would tell me your address——"

The Lady, gratefully.—"You are most kind indeed, sir, and I should be ashamed to trouble you or Miss Clare so much as that; and, as it is, I am ashamed of seeming so persistent about what you must, I'm sure, think a mere caprice."

Lester.—"What trouble could it possibly be? If you will tell me your address, I shall remember it."

The Lady.—"Then, as you are so kind—Miss Lefort, 23 Market Street."

Lester.—"Thanks. You shall hear to-day, or to-morrow at farthest. Meanwhile I will take it upon myself to ask you to finish your sketch this morning."

The Lady.—"Thanks indeed; but I could not think of such a thing."

Lester.—"But why not? Surely——"

The Lady, resolutely.—"I would rather not now, indeed. I would much rather wait till I can come with Miss Clare's permission."

Lester.—"I am afraid you are angry with me?"

The Lady, very coldly.—"Not at all—why should I be?"

Lester.—"For having interrupted your studies for a whole morning. And the least I can do——"

The Lady, with a smile.—"I daresay you have not done my studies very much harm."

Lester.—"But I cannot allow you to have had your long walk for nothing. I must really ask you to remain this morning, if only to set my conscience at ease."

The Lady.—"But I do not consider that I have had my walk for nothing, by any means. To meet with kindness surely cannot be called nothing. But, indeed, I would very much rather put off my sketch till another time."

Lester, seeing that she did not intend to be persuaded.—"Then, since

you will not do me this kindness, I will see that it shall be finished as soon as possible. But I am sorry—I wish I could persuade you to remain."

The Lady.—"You are most kind indeed. It is I that ought to be sorry."

Lester, not liking to press her further.—"You have no occasion to be, I assure you. By the way, Miss Lefort, if I might ask you, are you living in Denethorp? If you are visiting, I may very likely know something of your friends."

The Lady.—"We have been many years in Denethorp. My father is a teacher of French."

Lester.—"Oh, I think I have heard of him. I hope that he finds the place suit him, and that he has no want of pupils?"

The Lady.—"Oh, he does well enough. But now I must wish you good morning, and thank you once more."

She made him a grave bow, which *Lester* answered by raising his hat, and was gone. He wished that he had been able to persuade her to remain, and failing in this, would have willingly invented an excuse for seeing her as far as the great gates: but as that, to judge from her manner, was wholly out of the question, he lighted another cigar, and, with a good appetite for breakfast, strolled quietly back to the house.

On reaching the garden he met Miss Raymond.

"Why, what an early riser you are!" she said.

"Not in general, I am afraid."

"So I hear you are going into Parliament?"

"My aunt has told you? Yes, if I win."

"Of course you will win."

"Perhaps I shall, if you canvass for me. Prescott, they say, turns the heads of all the women; but if you appear in the field, I shall have one on my side worth a host."

"But suppose Mr Prescott turned mine with the others?"

"Then I should at once retire from the contest. The election would be virtually decided. Will my aunt be down to breakfast?"

"She is down."

"Already? Is it so late? By Jove, so it is!"

"Do you call this late—you, a Londoner?"

"I meant I did not know I had been out so long. I have been having a *rendezvous* with a young lady, you must know."

"With a young lady?"

"It is quite true, I assure you. I arranged it last night before I went to bed."

"You certainly make good use of your time. But what do you mean?"

"I have spoken the exact truth."

"Nonsense. Come into breakfast—that will be more amiable than asking riddles. Miss Clare has been down this half-hour."

"I will come then, since you lead. And you shall hear my confession."

At the breakfast-table he gave a lively account of his adventure,

much to Miss Raymond's amusement; but, when he mentioned the name Lefort,—

"Why, surely," she said, "it can't be Angélique?"

"And who is Angélique?"

"Oh, my friend—my travelling companion. She is staying with her friends, while I am staying with mine. Oh, I daresay it is her cousin—she has one. By the way, Miss Clare, I ought to call on the Leforts. They were old *protégés* of my dear mother. Could I, do you think?"

"Oh, certainly, if you wish it."

"That will be capital," said Hugh. "I am going to drive over to Denethorp after breakfast to see White. If you like to trust yourself with me, you can see your friends while I am doing my talk. White will keep me some time, I daresay."

"Oh, that would be delightful! I should so like the drive, but——"

But Miss Clare made no objection, and so the arrangement was made.

CHAPTER V.

Leaving Hugh Lester to the enjoyment of his well-earned breakfast, Miss Lefort, when he parted from her, walked quickly but quietly along the avenue towards the lodge, naturally rather flurried by her unexpected interruption, and yet rather pleased at it too; something in the same way as a child may feel pleased by the excitement of having been caught in a piece of mischief, scolded, and forgiven. She had liked the manner of her new acquaintance, and felt even flattered by his evident care to be polite to her under difficulties. In short, she had been anything but offended by her morning's adventure. In this mood she traversed the long three miles of dusty highroad leading to the town, and then, passing the few villas

and ornamental cottages, the exact reverse of ornamental, that showed Denethorp to be what builders call an improving place, and a narrow old-fashioned street or two, in which still remained not a few houses with the projecting storeys and pointed roofs of centuries ago, stopped before a bootmaker's shop that bore the number 23. The shutters were not yet taken down, nor was the shop-door open; but, at the side entrance, a shabby, red-armed servant-girl was producing a miniature and muddy flood by scrubbing and mopping the rough pavement in front of it. Stepping as well as she could over the barricade of mops and pails, Miss Lefort made her way up a dark and dusky staircase, smelling of close windows, to the second floor.

The room which Miss Lefort entered was in the front of the house, and looked out upon the narrow Market Street; that is to say, upon a double row of second and third rate shops, principally patronised by the small farmers of the neighbourhood who drove into town on Thursday—Denethorp market-day—and looked down upon by the wives and daughters of the mill-owners, lawyers, doctors, and parsons, who composed the aristocracy and plutocracy of the place, and who, for the most part, did their shopping at Redchester. It was therefore for six days out of the seven rather excessively quiet, not to say dull; and, on the seventh, very much too noisy. This particular room in No. 23 was not of a character in itself to mitigate the effect of the external dullness that reigned from Friday to Wednesday; and as its windows commanded the whole length of the street, it had the full benefit of the one day of bustle. It was small, and poorly furnished in what may be called for the occasion, after the same manner as that in which one speaks of the style *Pompadour* or *Louis XIV.*, or *de la Renaissance*, the style *crinière*, or horse-hair style—a style too well known and too unvarying even in its minutest details to require special description. There are few so fortunate as never to have met with it once; and whoever has seen one specimen knows as much about it as if he had seen a hundred. The occupants of the room, however, had more individuality than the chairs on which they had to sit—a remark that cannot be made of all occupants of all rooms, even when the latter are not furnished in the horse-hair mode.

The group which they formed consisted of two young children—a boy and a girl of about nine and seven years old respectively, who were romping noisily upon the hearth-rug in a manner that would have horrified all believers in the virtue of clean clothes; a man of

about fifty-five at the least, or of seventy at the most, short, thin, narrow-chested, pale, stooping, bald, with meagre sharp features, a yellow complexion, and long and lean but delicate hands, shabbily dressed and unmistakably a foreigner, who was drinking coffee at the table; and a girl, or rather young woman, who was engaged in reading a letter at the window.

She was like Miss Lefort, and yet not like her at the same time; that is to say, there was a vague and general resemblance between the two in an altogether indefinable way, and a wide dissimilarity between them in all matters of detail.

Now there are three ways of describing the appearance of a beautiful woman. One is to treat her passport fashion—*Height*, five feet so many inches; *age*, five-and-twenty, more or less; *figure*, slight and undulating; *complexion*, brown and pale; *hair*, dark brown; *eyes*, the same—large, soft, and tender; *nose*, straight; and so on. This, of course, is an accurate way; but it has the defect of never producing anything better than a common form applicable to many hundreds. It is easy enough to make a catalogue of good points; but it is not by a mere series of good points that any idea of beauty is expressed to the mind. Another way is to adopt the laudatory style, and to say, as might justly be said in this case, that she was of exactly the right height for her style of figure, and of exactly the right style of figure for her height, and that she carried both with grace; that her autumnal complexion combined the merits of the *brunette* and of the *blonde*; and that, beautiful as she was in all respects, her greatest wealth of beauty was in her eyes. Yet another way is the poetical, or metaphorical; but then that is always open to the objection that to say what a thing is like is very different indeed from saying what it really is. Such an image, for in-

stance, as that of a harvest moon shining against all rule in a night of May upon a garden of pale hyacinths, which had indeed bowed their heads but had forgotten to close their bells when the sun went down, would be absolutely out of place in the sober prose of common life, however useful it might have proved to any lover of this girl's who happened to have a knack of rhyming.

These are about the only three ways; and, perhaps, if any one should take the trouble to combine what has been said under the head of each method, he might succeed in producing an imaginary portrait not wildly unlike the original.

But it is an unfortunate and lamentable fact that, while it is difficult, if not impossible, to praise intelligibly, to find fault and point out defects intelligibly is the easiest thing in the world. While it requires something approaching to genius to make a complimentary speech about any man that does not sound like sarcasm or drivel, it does not require that a man should be a Demosthenes to deliver, without going beyond the truth, a telling philippic against even the best and wisest. To descend, then, from general to particular cases, beautiful as this woman undoubtedly was, it is far easier to point out her faults of appearance than to describe her merits.

There was first, then, a want of that harmony about her by which many women who are plain of feature are rendered almost if not quite beautiful. The moon of September in a night of spring, the flower remaining open after sunset, are images that may suggest beauty, but certainly do not suggest harmony or repose. Then her admirably-shaped mouth was of the smallest: a doubtful merit as regards beauty of feature, and always a positive fault as regards beauty of expression. Then, too, the grace of her carriage was plainly a little studied; unnecessarily

so, for it was graceful enough by nature, and probably less languid than she made it seem. Again, her forehead lacked both height and breadth without being more than commonly well formed. Her delicate hand, moreover, wanted the plumpness that a young hand ought to have, thus telling either of ill health, present or to come, or else of excess of nervous excitability. But, after all, these were all but spots on the sun. She seemed to be a few years younger than Miss Lefort in point of figure; but in point of expression, which is a far better test, she looked decidedly the elder.

When Miss Lefort entered the room, all looked up suddenly as though she had not been expected; and the two children ran up to her and seized her hands and dress. In striking contrast to her who has been last described, her figure was without languor, and her complexion had been freshened by the morning air, so that, if she was far less beautiful, she was certainly not less pleasant to look upon.

Monsieur Lefort.—"Good morning, Marie. You are back soon."

Marie.—"Good morning, father. Ah, Angélique, you should have been with me this morning."

Angélique, folding her letter, and a little languidly.—"And why this morning in particular?"

They all spoke in French; but her voice was of a kind to render almost too musical that most unmusical of languages. But even her voice, too, had a fault—it wanted fulness.

Marie.—"Because you have lost an adventure. You see what comes of being an early bird."

Angélique, exerting herself.—"But I don't like worms, dear Marie; I prefer coffee. I hope, though, that yours was a nice fat one?"

Marie.—"Hm! that depends."

Ernest and Fleurette.—"Tell us, Marie! And have you made any more pictures?"

Marie, giving them her sketch-book.—“There—see what I have done.”

Ernest.—“Why, it is all empty.”

Marie.—“That is an end of the story, then. But I see, *Angélique*, that you have had your worm as well, and without the trouble of going out to look for it. What is it? A letter? Why, that is an event! What is it? Who is it from?”

Angélique.—“From *Félix*. He is in England.”

Marie.—“*Félix* in England? You are joking, surely.”

Angélique, looking through her eyelashes.—“Is it, then, so strange that he should come to England?”

Marie, going up to and embracing her.—“Not the least; not at all! How I should like to see him! But I am sure he cannot be good enough. If he is not the handsomest and cleverest man in the world, I assure you that I have made up my mind to hate him. Are you not afraid?”

Angélique, looking at the children.—“Hush, dear *Marie*.”

Marie.—“But does he tell you nothing? You always are saying, you know, that I only care about facts. Is he well?”

Ernest and *Fleurette*.—“But the story, *Marie*!”

Angélique.—“He is quite well; and there are no facts, indeed.”

Marie.—“Oh, well, I will have patience, especially as I am hungry, for my worm was not very satisfying—not half so interesting as yours, after all.”

Ernest and *Fleurette*, vociferously.—“The story!”

Marie.—“My dear children, I am dying with hunger. Get me the butter, *Ernest*, and you the bread, *Fleurette*, or I shall have to eat my story instead, and then there will be none of it left for you. Fancy *Félix* being in England! Can you not tell me anything out of the letter, just to relish the tartines? there's a dear girl!”

Angélique.—“There is nothing that will not keep.”

Marie.—“Then I must put an extra lump of sugar in my coffee, to make up. Have you any news, father?”

M. Lefort.—“None that is good.”

Marie.—“I hope there is nothing wrong?”

M. Lefort.—“No. I only mean that every day that passes without a letter makes things seem more doubtful. Of course I know that they must have their hands full—but what then? Ah! I remember forty years ago——”

Marie.—“But no news is good news, they say. As for myself, I don't expect to hear till all is settled. Why should any one trouble to write before?”

M. Lefort.—“Well, a man who has waited thirty years can afford to wait thirty-one, I suppose. And so we must be patient,—that's all.

Marie.—“And hope.”

M. Lefort.—“Ah! you are young. I did so once. But now you will have to hope for us both, if you speak of hope.”

Marie.—“But, seriously, dear father, why should we not all hope? Even if the worst comes to the worst, and nothing can be done for us, what have we really to fear? Are we not happy as we are? Should we be happier for a change? We should be no richer than now, and you would have to work just as hard. Should we even be as rich as we shall be in England? *Angélique* must be a great singer one day; and am I too stupid to teach notes and scales?”

M. Lefort, smiling in spite of himself.—“Conceited girl!”

Marie.—“I thought you would agree with me. Oh, I believe in myself immensely, and am not a bit afraid for any of us. That was very good coffee indeed. Who made it?”

Fleurette.—“I did.”

Marie.—“Then I believe in you most of all, and I will tell you the story.”

Ernest.—"And me?"

Marie.—"You may listen. Well, once upon a time there lived a princess——"

Ernest.—"Who was beautiful, of course."

Marie.—"No, not at all. But she was very fond of beautiful things and beautiful creatures—perhaps for that very reason—and so one day she set out to look for them all over the world. First of all, she looked in her own looking-glass, but that wouldn't do."

Fleurette.—"Why not?"

Marie.—"Because hers was a glass that always told the truth. So then——"

Ernest.—"What was her name?"

Marie.—"She had none. Then she looked out at window, but she saw nothing but people who were nearly as ugly as herself. At last, however, she heard of a country a very long way off indeed—four miles at least—where there lived a queen; and as she heard that it was full of beautiful things, she set out at once to find it."

Fleurette.—"All by herself?"

Marie.—"All by herself. That is the only way to find out beautiful things."

Fleurette.—"And wasn't she afraid?"

Marie.—"I'm not sure she wasn't a little, just at first. Well, she left the palace where the king her father, and the prince her brother, and the princess her sister, and the princess her cousin all lived together, and walked on and on and on along a dusty road, until she didn't feel quite sure about her way. At last she didn't know which way to turn; but she saw that one looked prettier than another, and so she took it. Well, the road got prettier and prettier every step she took until she came to a white cottage built of stone and covered with leaves, with an old witch sitting at the door nursing a black cat."

Fleurette.—"And then, wasn't she frightened?"

Marie.—"Anyhow she was bold enough to ask the old witch, 'Is this the queen's country?' And the witch pointed with her crutch to a gate, and said, 'If you go through there, and then turn to the right, and keep straight on, you'll come to the avenue'—just as though she was not a witch at all, but only a common old woman."

Ernest.—"Perhaps that's what she was."

Marie.—"You know nothing about it. Then the princess said 'Thank you,' and walked along the avenue till she looked over some palings and saw the most beautiful creatures."

Fleurette.—"What were they like? Birds?"

Marie.—"No; they had four legs, and large black eyes, and some were dappled, and some white, and some black, and some grey. And the princess said, 'Oh, if I could only find out what makes these creatures so beautiful!'"

Ernest.—"She ought to have caught them."

Marie.—"She wandered about, and went every day to look at the creatures. Then she thought she would make some pictures of them, and at last, just as she was beginning to find out their true secret——"

Fleurette.—"What?"

Marie.—"She suddenly heard a voice exclaim, 'Who is that in my park-paling?'"

Ernest.—"Who was it? The queen?"

Marie.—"No, it was a prince, the heir to the throne. He looked very fierce indeed, and had a cigar in his mouth."

Ernest.—"But princes in stories never used to smoke cigars."

Marie.—"No; but they do now. Then the princess got very frightened, and fell on her knees and begged for mercy."

Fleurette.—"And did he kill her?"

Marie.—"No; he took pity on the princess; but said that the queen, his aunt, would certainly

have her put to death. But he said he would ask the queen to forgive her if she would promise not to frighten the beautiful creatures again, as it seems she had done. So you see she had been rightly punished by being frightened herself."

Fleurette.—"And did the queen pardon her?"

The red-armed Servant, after tapping at the door.—"A note for you, miss."

Marie, eagerly.—"For me? From whom?"

The Servant, with an air of awe.—"Brought by a young man, miss, a groom up at Earl's Dene. He said as there was no answer."

M. Lefort.—"From Earl's Dene!"

Marie, after passing through a slight cloud of disappointment.—

"There, Angélique! I have letters as well as you! The queen sent her this letter:—

"'DEAR PRINCESS,'—No, it was the prince sent it.—'Dear Princess, —Her Majesty has much pleasure in giving you permission to use the Lodge Park at any time you please, and also hopes to have the further pleasure of seeing the result. I pro-

mised her to add that she would rather you did not enter the Lodge Park at the great beech, as it disturbs the deer, but through the gate on the other side. They will tell you the way to it at the lodge.

'Hoping you will consider this some amends for the rudeness of which, I fear, you must have thought me guilty this morning,—'I am, yours most truly,

HUGH LESTER.

'As Mr Lefort lives in Dene-thorp, I trust you will not think that Miss Clare's permission applies to yourself only. The keepers will have orders accordingly.'

M. Lefort, having looked at the note.—"This is very polite indeed. Why, Marie, this looks very like a real adventure."

Marie.—"And a pleasant one, is it not?"

Angélique.—"What sort of person is this Mr Lester?"

Ernest, slyly.—"And will the prince marry the princess?"

Fleurette.—"And shall we all go and see the beautiful creatures?"

Marie.—"I don't know anything more about it."

THE FARMING AND PEASANTRY OF THE CONTINENT.

THIS is an Address which highly merits the attention of practical farmers and political economists. It treats of subjects which possess the strongest interest for both ; it contains the results of the observations which Mr Howard made during many visits to the Continent ; and it speaks of questions which have raised great controversies in the scientific and farming worlds. We do not propose, on the present occasion, to range over the whole extent of ground covered by this Address ; we intend rather to confine our notice to a few points of great importance, on which Mr Howard speaks in very decided language, and with an authority justly due to large experience, high intelligence, and careful personal inquiry on the spot. Political economists in England have been too much in the habit of pronouncing dogmatically on certain questions, in which accurate determination of facts ought to have preceded assertion. Very loose and imperfect evidence has been relied on for far-reaching propositions, which have been previously adopted from the bias of passion or political feeling. No trustworthy solution of these questions can ever be obtained until careful analysis of the results furnished by experience shall have furnished a sure foundation for judgment. Hence the process adopted by Mr Howard has peculiar value in the decision of such matters. He is a thorough farmer himself, profoundly acquainted with the best and most productive methods of agriculture, familiar with every variety of agricultural implement, and, as his Address shows, manifestly competent, by knowledge and reflection, to understand and judge the moral and social as

well as economical elements of these problems.

First of all presents itself the exceedingly interesting and important question of the condition of the agricultural labourer on the Continent. In this country his state has been made the subject of the fiercest invective. England has been held up to the scorn of the world for her treatment of the workers whose toil extracts from her fields the food of her population. No invective has been thought too severe for a description of their condition. The agricultural labourer has been painted as one of the most degraded of human beings, and then his degradation has been pointed at as the offspring of a cruel conspiracy directed against his happiness by pride of class and avarice. The finger of warning is daily lifted to extort the reconstruction of his social condition by the threat of revolution. Politicians and philanthropists combine in this holy crusade for the relief of oppressed humanity. The days of Jack Cade, it would seem, have really come back to this strong, rich, and prosperous England of the nineteenth century. The wealthier the upper strata of society become, the heavier, we are told, and more intolerable, is the pressure with which they weigh on the classes whose labour creates their prosperity ; the deeper the misery of those who, in the place of gratitude, are repaid with oppression. To be a Dorsetshire landlord or farmer is a state of life to which a man might well be ashamed to belong. For the honour of our country, one's heart palpitates with anxiety to learn what is the condition of the same class in foreign lands — whether England stands

alone in her infamy, or whether the poverty, which excites so much generous commiseration here, may not meet with its miserable representative on other soils and under other social and political arrangements. It is painful enough to feel sympathy for sufferings which one believes to be, if not incurable, at any rate susceptible of only slow and difficult amelioration; but to believe that the wretchedness which wounds one's eyes has been cured elsewhere, and that wiser institutions and juster political combinations have raised the peasant to a position of comfort and self-respect—that, indeed, is a trial hard to bear. No right-minded man—and there are right-minded and generous men in England by tens of thousands—will willingly acquiesce in the continuance of so shaming a contrast. It is essential that the real truth of the matter should be known. Is it true that the English labourer is plunged in misery and degradation, from which men of the same class in foreign countries are free? and if a remedy has been discovered elsewhere, may it not be applied with equal success here? On this very grave matter Mr Howard furnishes us with information of immense value. He is an eyewitness, one who has taken infinite pains to reach the truth of the facts, and who is eminently qualified to take their measure. Let us listen to what he says. The first evidence he adduces comes from the Sologne, about 150 miles south of Paris. The region is poor, though much has been recently done to improve its agriculture. Here “wages are 1s. 8d. a-day in summer, and 1s. 3d. in winter; no extras in harvest, but some piecework. Low as these wages are, they are said to have doubled within a few years.” 10s. a-week in summer, and 7s. 6d. in winter, without any increase in harvest-time, are certainly not brilliant wages for any part of England; even the Dorsetshire

standard must be considered as up to this level, whilst the average of English counties presents a decidedly more satisfactory remuneration for the labourer. Yet even this moderate scale, we are told, is decidedly higher than what would have been found a few years ago, so that up to that period it is certain that wages in the Sologne were very seriously below the English level. But how many hours a-day do these labourers work? Mr Howard's next instance will instruct us on this vital point; and it is so very interesting on many accounts, that we venture to give it at full length:—

“In my letter to the Duke of Richmond I referred to the large farm of M. Cail, which is situated at La Briche, near Tours, 200 miles south-west of Paris.” (We may remark that Touraine is one of the richest districts of France. Those who have travelled through it will remember the splendour of its vegetation. M. Cail is proprietor of one of the largest engineering establishments in France, a great builder of locomotives.) “In the early part of August 1867, I accompanied him to his farm of La Briche. It consists of about 3800 acres, which he has reclaimed from waste land, bog, and wood. Being a thorough utilitarian, not a tree or fence of any kind has been left; the whole is laid out in large fields, some nearly a mile across, which have been drained, and good hard roads made through the whole property. One good central homestead and eight minor ones have been erected. . . . The central homestead, the most wonderful place of the kind I have ever seen, is worth making the journey to see. The corn-barn will contain 1250 acres of unthrashed corn. . . . It has sheds for 600 bullocks, a covered fold for 3000 sheep, a huge granary for thrashed grain, tramways to every part, a large beet-root distillery, at which the roots are made into sugar or spirit, according to the prospects of the market. . . . The condition of the labourer in this part of France, as in most others, is a very hard one. At each of the eight homesteads I have referred to is a married couple, who supply food to the labourers employed in their division, the greater part of whom are unmarried. The team-men sleep with the cattle,

two in a bed, or rather in a box, on a sack of straw, a rude floor being put up at one end of the sheds. Up to that period I had never seen men so nearly reduced to a state of slavery. I arrived at the farm about daylight, and found all the hands at work. The hours in summer, I learned, were from 4 A.M. to 8 P.M.—and, mark you, till noon on Sundays. The wages, without any perquisites, for these long hours, were 1s. 8d. a-day. A good crop of wheat was being cut, the men using fagging-hooks; 5s. was the price paid for cutting and binding an imperial acre, and the wages paid by M. Cail are higher than the current wages of the neighbourhood. . . . At the time of my visit I thought the condition of the farm-labourer of La Briche might be exceptional; but I find, upon inquiry, that it is not at all an unfavourable specimen of the condition of the French peasantry, and that a franc a-day has not been an unusual scale of pay."

This is a startling picture, truly, of the condition of the agricultural labourer in Touraine, one of the most favoured regions of France. The magnitude of M. Cail's operations furnishes the most trustworthy assurance that labour is in unusually high demand in this neighbourhood, and commands proportionate remuneration. He farms highly—that is, he expends large capital on appliances and labour. The tillage is superior, and is assisted by large manufacturing operations. How different must be the field for employment at La Briche, to what it must show itself in a district of peasant-proprietors, where no distillery or sugar-manufactory raises its head, where the capital of a rich man is not vigorously applied to the sustentation of labour! Yet to lie two in a bed of straw, intermingled with the cattle, is the normal state of men who earn the wages of an energetic, intelligent, and high-farming capitalist. What would be the cry of Canon Girdlestone if such a spectacle were to present itself in Dorsetshire? What limit would compress the invectives of the Liberal press of the whole country? Even the spirit of French journal-

ists is profoundly stirred by an exhibition so painful. The praises of the French system, so loudly sung by our economists, might have led us to expect in France a self-complacent comparison of the French peasant with the English; yet the newspaper press of Vendôme exclaims "that the fact of the depopulation of the agricultural districts is the gravest thing we have to register at present. It is nothing less than life or death for the whole country. Wages have been kept down, and, with a view to this object, marrying has been discouraged by proprietors and farmers." Here are the very processes which have brought down such vituperation on English landlords. English squires may refuse to build cottages, to keep the population down, but they are no worse than their French neighbours; and so far the peculiar infamy which it has been the effort of many to affix on English country gentlemen has no justification in fact.

If we cross the frontier of France and accompany Mr Howard into Prussia, we shall meet with the same sights. Prussia, too, has been the favourite theme for the eulogy of English economists; yet what does Mr Howard tell us that he found near Cologne? "The men, as in France and other parts of the Continent, sleep in the stable with their bullocks and horses. The wages to farm-labourers are paid all in money, and are from 1s. 2d. to 1s. 6d. per day in summer, and 1s. to 1s. 3d. in winter;" and this after a rise of 25 to 30 per cent within the last twenty-five years, and amidst agricultural operations on a splendid scale of expenditure. On another Prussian farm, where beet is largely grown, and additional quantities bought for the distillery, the wages throughout the year are 14d. a-day; in the summer months the working hours are from 5.30 A.M. to 8 P.M. The women get 10d. a-day; and in this

district of Germany, be it carefully observed, "there are a great number of small holdings." In Prussian Silesia life uses the wretched labourer still more cruelly. In winter he has 4d. a-day, the spring raises him to an additional penny, and he attains his climax in summer, when 7½d. to 10d. constitutes his share of the rewards of the harvest.

As we extend our tour over most regions of the Continent, the same sights, the same statements, meet our eyes and ears. "In Austria" (that part visited by Mr Howard) "no class of tenant-proprietors exists; all are proprietors, except in a few districts and rare instances." These are the famous *bauers*, or peasant-proprietors of German Austria—men who till farms of which they are owners, but men of substance, often possessing a dozen horses, who have entertained imperial princes, and whose peasant dress has given them distinction in the counsels of the Reichsrath at Vienna. How fares the labourer under their administration?—

"The labourers I find to be badly off, wages being about 9d. to 10d. per day. At one village I went to, I had an opportunity of seeing how they were lodged. One large barn-like building, with only a ground-floor, I found divided into two rooms. In one, 40 feet long, 20 feet wide, and 10 feet high, I found six beds and four families; in the other, somewhat smaller, were five beds and three families. There was one common cooking-stove to the whole, and, to add to the wretchedness of the place, it was infested with rats. A more deplorable scene it had never been my lot to witness."

But then, can any good thing come out of Nazareth? This ever slow, dull, retrograde Austria—what could be expected from such a quarter? Well, then, let us turn to Belgium, the far-famed land of small tillage, the ideal of peasant-proprietorship, the delight of political economists, and the shamer of aristocratic England—what tale does Belgium tell? "In Hainault

the average wages are 1s. 1d. a-day without food, the maximum being 1s. 8d. and the minimum 8½d. per day; wages, nevertheless, are said to have advanced 25 to 30 per cent since 1846. These figures were given me by the Inspector-General of Agriculture." Before 1846, therefore, some 6½d. per day was the remuneration of some Belgian agricultural labourers, and the eulogy of Flemish farming had been written at that time. We heard much of the thrift and the happiness of the peasants who owned land, but Mr Mill and his economical friends told us little of the labouring population. The juxtaposition of so much bliss with so much misery was striking, certainly; it would have been well if we had been instructed as to its causes and its remedy. The combination, side by side, of great wretchedness with great wealth, is at this hour held up as the peculiar disgrace of society as it is constituted in England; yet the same spectacle occurs in Belgium with equal vividness, and presumably with equal infamy. Near Ostend "the labourer seemed dejected and in a bad condition. 'Poor things!' exclaimed a Belgian landlady, 'they have not much comfort in this life.'"

The preceding extracts abundantly show, we conceive, the great value of Mr Howard's observations. They bear with crushing force on the widespread delusion that England has to blush in the presence of foreign countries for the treatment she inflicts on her agricultural labourers. They dispel this strange and most disparaging fiction. They establish, what is confirmed by other testimony derived from many quarters, that on a general average the English agricultural labourer receives higher remuneration than exists in any other part of Europe, Holland perhaps excepted; and we are not very sure about the exception. The English peasant ob-

tains higher wages in money ; even the largest of the sums mentioned by Mr Howard—1s. 8d. a-day—is equalled in many cases in the lowest agricultural counties, or nearly ; whilst there are important additions made at mowing and harvest-time, which swell the amount received. The rest—that is, the overwhelming majority of English counties—furnish a much higher figure. And money will buy more, we believe, in England, taking all the articles consumed by a labourer's family, than in most—nay, we may say all—parts of the Continent. Clothing is cheaper, and so, in many cases, is bread ; and equally cheaper in many English counties is the important article of fuel. And then the relative comfort of the labourers must be compared. The tidings of men living with bullocks and horses would raise something like a frenzy in England. Where are the words to be found that would satisfy the invective, the just invective, of every humane person ? Their anger would then stand on a foundation of fact, which is often wanting in the declamations of the friends of the agricultural poor. And, over and above all, there is the poor-law. We hear nothing of a poor-law abroad. It is too true that workhouses in not a few localities are not such as one can wish ; but it cannot be denied that, as a whole, very substantial provision is made in England for the support of agricultural labourers who have no means of subsistence. It is certain that an enormous charge is paid by the owners and occupiers of land for this great object ; and it is equally certain that the sense of security against actual starvation is brought home to those whose labour cultivates the soil. What have the foreign labourers that can be put on a level with the workhouse—varied, as it so frequently is, by outdoor allowances ? What guarantee have those miserable agglomerations of human beings in long sheds on the ground, that they shall not

perish of hunger ? What hold on the purse or the food of the peasant-proprietors of Belgium have the workmen at 8½d. a-day against the infirmities and the pains of old age ? This is no trifling weight to be placed in the scale of England, when those who take pleasure in decrying her institutions set up the excellence of foreign practice. That the farming classes, whether tenants or proprietors, make heavy contributions to this substantial increase of agricultural wages is incontestable ; why is it so regularly and so obstinately left out of the account ? Why is every item of good which can be assigned to the credit of foreign management of land so scrupulously recorded, and little but the evil computed on the side of England ? There is an *animus* in the matter, a wish to paint the picture in pre-selected colours, a desire to impose a conclusion which was derived from passion, and not from a careful examination of facts. On no other hypothesis can so strange a phenomenon be explained. Writers have painted under the stimulus of democratic feeling. Was not England a country of great estates, tenanted by non-proprietary farmers ; and was not therefore its spirit aristocratic, and at variance with the great sentiment of equality ? What better, then, than to fling discredit on her farmers, to hold up before the imagination the glowing ideal of small proprietors covering the land with a happiness which it would require the pen of a Rousseau to portray ? But then there was the labouring class, the class most peculiarly deserving of the sympathy of philosophers, the great mass of the population engaged on the land, and whose wellbeing was the test of all true democratic theory. What was to be said of their condition in foreign parts ? On this essential topic a discreet but profound silence was observed. Nothing but dark and dismal colours could be obtained, if ever the

object was alluded to. But, at any rate, common justice might have been respected. A similar veil might have been thrown over the life of the English peasant. Men, however, who are bigoted by passion, seldom think of justice. The miseries of the English labourer were placed in the very van of the battle. His poverty, his want of interest in the prosperity of his work, his scanty wages, his lack of the sense of independence, were arrayed in line to cover the country which ill used him with the burning blush of shame. We heard much of the ignoble English cottage, of the cruelty of landlords who would raise no additional shelter for swelling numbers, of the tyranny of tenant-farmers, of the degradation of the workhouse; but no one spoke of the French teamman spending his nights in companionship with his horses, of the black bread that fed him, or of population vanishing from impediments to marriage and from emigration. Yet, on the very basis laid down by the philosophers, the condition of these people was the test of truth or error. Even the suggestions made by science were neglected. The assumption—so natural to make—that the vast manufacturing industry of England, coupled with the known excellence of her farming, had done something for the tillers of her fields, was neither made nor examined. It has been left to us to lay stress on the harmony of Mr Howard's statements with what science would have taught us to expect. It was probable that England's agricultural poor would derive large advantage from her manufacturing energy and the markets it supplied; and Mr Howard's conclusions can plead the authority of reasonable presumption. The superiority of English to foreign wages, which comes forth so markedly from Mr Howard's inquiry on the spot, is exactly what a general knowledge of the economical condition of the several

countries would have led us to look for, and, consequently, can claim that confidence in its reality which the agreement of statement with scientific probability naturally warrants.

But we must not be understood, when claiming this superiority as a fact, to be expressing satisfaction with the state of our agricultural labourers. That is a very different matter. Our peasants may be, and are, better off than the generality of European labourers; but their condition, regarded in itself, presents much to mourn over, and much also to be improved. To dwell on the wretchedness which is too often visible in our own system, without noticing the still greater miseries of our neighbours, in the interest of a foregone conclusion, is one thing; to recognise and expose sufferings which exist, in the hope of obtaining alleviation, is another. The condition of peasant-life must, from the law of human existence, leave much room for regret, and rouse strong desires for improvement. And progress here, as everywhere else, can be gained only by first appreciating what is evil, and then making the effort for its diminution. We sympathise, therefore, heartily with those who strive with so much zeal to call attention to the position of the English peasant, and suggest means for its improvement. Mr Howard's description of what the same class has to endure abroad, if it excites our relative thankfulness in looking at England, in no way lessens our sense of what humanity and public policy demand in behalf of our own countrymen. At the same time, it ought not to be forgotten that the agricultural labourer possesses in one very important respect a decided advantage over the artisan of the town. The manufacturing people of England are exposed to an incessant danger, which at times overwhelms them with calamity. If England manufactures goods for all the world, if her wares are sold

in every market, she must share in the fortunes of all her buyers. A shopkeeper who supplies dresses for a London season, may incur disastrous loss by the sudden proclamation of a Court mourning. A nation which sells to many buyers may find a portion of its population plunged into distress by events which injure the power of her customers to buy. A civil war, as in America or in China, a bad harvest in a foreign land, or any other of the countless vicissitudes of human life, may impoverish the resources of those who are ordinary purchasers in the English markets: and then the painful, and, alas! too familiar scenes of unemployed workmen harass and perplex public feeling. We know but too well what miseries want of employment has created in Lancashire and the east of London; and these calamities spring from causes wholly beyond English control. With the exception of the great Irish famine, occasioned by the exceptional misfortune of the disease of the potato, no distress for many years has been experienced in the agricultural districts which can be put in comparison with the sufferings of the towns. This is an element of great value in the lot of the cultivators of the land: if their earnings are not as good as those obtained by the artisans, they have a set-off of some importance in their exemption from a destitution which springs up with a suddenness as overpowering as it is incapable of being averted.

What measures should be adopted for bettering the condition of the agricultural labourer, it is not easy to specify with precision. Their case admits of the simultaneous co-operation of many combined efforts, rather than of the intervention of a great single force. Individual action can achieve larger results here than legislation. Local aid can facilitate emigration from agricultural districts to those which possess a stronger demand for

labour. Information can be supplied, and the transition be made easier in many ways. Still more, much may be expected from the progressive enlightenment of the farmer and landlord classes. The days are nearly over when a farmer grudged every shilling which was spent on labour; but there are few who as yet employ labour to the extent to which it may be made remunerative. Much more may be done with immense profit to the farmer; many an act of superior tillage would enrich abundantly the workman and his employer. No doubt the improved position achieved of late years for the peasants is due to the influence of this cause; but if all the farmers of England are taken into account, it cannot be questioned that an enormous field for productive labour lies open to the agricultural world. The more the farmer understands his own interest, the more intelligent and scientific he becomes, the more will he employ labour, and the greater will be his own benefit and the benefit of every class in the community. Here again landlords may render very effectual aid by building more and better cottages, and by substantial allotments of land in connection with them. Mr Neville has shown how two excellent cottages can be built for £170, which will bring in interest of 5 per cent to the landlord, besides full agricultural rent for half an acre of land attached to each. Great stress is laid by many on education. We have not a word to say against the promotion of so excellent an object; still, it may be questioned, what are the precise results which we ought to expect from it? Whatever awakens the faculties and enlightens the mind must be a clear and most important gain amidst the general chances of life; and assuredly, if no other good could be realised than the imparting the ability to read and write, so as to

furnish leisure hours with an occupation at once amusing and elevating, this is a national gain of great value. Modern society can easily provide machinery for the supply of books and journals. But there remains the inquiry, What can education do for the agricultural labourer in procuring for him better wages? We confess that for the attainment of this end special instruction seems to us far more promising of good than general education. We should wish to see the labourer trained to carry out every operation on the farm. The farmer is for him the best of schoolmasters. A labourer who has learned all the various processes of tillage, who knows how to plough, manage horses, work any kind of implement, hoe, drain, and mow, is in an excellent position for availing himself of opportunities of rising to a higher position; and the farmer will be no loser by having all his servants efficient for all purposes. An intelligent workman returns more for his wages than an ignorant one; and many a loss will be avoided when the regular man in charge of any particular service falls ill or dies. Moreover, a village filled with skilful and well-trained men will rear up lads to the same skill, and they will be far abler than they are now to emigrate, if they wish it, to agricultural colonies. Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and the like, would find prosperity for countless labourers, if only they were fit to occupy and cultivate land on their arrival in the colony. But the landlords must also do their part in this great national function. If the labourers are trained practically, a field must be provided for their efforts. The system which so many advocate — Lord Leicester for instance — of large farms exclusively, would defeat the end we aim at, by withholding from the peasant the means of applying the instruction he had received. Small holdings must not be ex-

pelled from the land, or else the agricultural population must pine.

But the peasant, however skilful, has no capital; how is it possible to intrust him with a farm? what means can he have to work it? But is there not the analogy of the artisan? A succession of steps lies before him, up which he constantly mounts to the highest manufacturing and trading summits, and yet he equally starts with no capital. Men who entered Manchester in the lowest grade of workmen, have, in countless numbers, filled all the positions of the commercial hierarchy, and ended by owning some of the largest mills in the whole world. No doubt the posts which a rising workman can occupy in manufacturing industry are multitudinous compared with those available for the agricultural labourer; still the latter does often possess opportunities for advancement, and if the duty of providing these were heartily recognised by landlords and farmers, they might be largely multiplied. The Flemish peasant thrives because he can sell his garden produce to a neighbouring town; the same thing might happen in England, and we actually have witnessed it ourselves. We know of small men, tenants holding land at the distance of some eight miles from a town, cultivating plots (cottier-like) exceeding an acre, and covering them with onions, carrots, and beet, so thick as scarcely to leave space to plant a foot. Rent is paid at full rates with the utmost regularity and ease, for tradesmen come from long distances to buy the crops on the ground at very remunerative prices, and carry them away themselves in their own carts. The tenant's need of capital is not large, but he accumulates savings as time rolls on; and if the mania for gigantic farms has not seized upon the whole country, the single acre is exchanged for a wider tenancy, and the rise in the world has commenced. The labourer has been market-gardener, and passes into the

state of small farmer ; his career, if not so diversified, bears at least some resemblance to that of the advancing artisan. It is obvious, however, that in the agricultural regions the will and ideas of the landlord play an infinitely larger part than in the manufacturing world. In trade, the variety of positions filled by workmen is endless, and they depend very little on the pleasure of the mill-owner or the great manufacturer. The size of holdings lies, on the other hand, within the discretion of the land-owner, and is not necessarily unchangeable. It thus becomes a matter of the most serious importance for our agricultural population in England, What are the notions which fill the minds of the land-owning class ? Their education in the upper sphere of intelligence which they occupy is as vital an element in the prospective welfare of their labourers as the instruction of the labourers themselves. A man like Lord Leicester, who sees no excellence but in large farms—and one like Lord Carnarvon, who is convinced of the merits of a mixed system, in which farms of various sizes are grouped together—are separated from each other in their action as landlords by the widest interval. Whilst the tendency of the one must be to extinguish ultimately small holdings, the practice of the other is to reject an exclusive agglomeration, and to reserve, avowedly and upon principle, intermediate holdings on his estates. It is clear that the course which is to prevail at last will be determined by the advantages which each system offers as a method of culture. If large farms are in the long-run more profitable instruments of tillage, they will displace other systems ; if, on the contrary, each has its own superiorities, though they may be balanced by peculiar disadvantages, then the mixed system may maintain its ground, to the manifest benefit of the intelligent and promising labourer. Kindly feelings

may retard the universal domination of the former method, but no permanent reliance can be placed on philanthropy in such matters. The occupations of mankind cannot be governed by sentiment, though the feeling which each is calculated to engender is a most real and important item in the general estimate. A contented and prosperous body of labourers possesses a large money value for landlords. But it will be the final balance of advantage which will determine the agricultural position of the nation.

This consideration leads us up to the second point which we wish to notice in Mr Howard's Address. This Address is a discussion of foreign farming still more than of the state of the agricultural labourer. It reviews the condition and the results of that far-famed *petite culture*, that cultivation of the soil by peasant-proprietors, which has been so loudly extolled by Mr Mill and other political economists. Its excellence has been pronounced to be so incontestable that it has been made the basis of a plan for the settlement of the Land question in Ireland. Introduce small proprietors into Ireland, say Mr Mill, and in substance Mr Bright, and the country is regenerated ; peasant-proprietorship works wonders. Mr Mill acknowledges that the advantage of small properties in land is one of the most disputed questions in the range of political economy. He, however, feels no doubt ; he appeals to the judgment of Continental authorities. They are better acquainted with the system than we are, and their opinion must be correct. We are blinded by the sight of our large farms and broad homesteads ; we have even forgotten the traditions of Old England ; the yeomanry, once the glory of England, have almost disappeared. They have been wiser on the Continent : the French, the Swiss, the Belgians, and many others, have demonstrated that, after all, the old methods

were the most energetic and the most productive. They have vindicated peasant-proprietorship as the most scientific process even in these modern times. It works wonders and sheds blessings wherever its beneficent power is allowed to operate. "The magic of *property*," as Mr Mill is never tired of quoting from Arthur Young, "turns the wilderness into a garden." It reclaims wastes by its constructive labour; no limits are set to the industry of the proprietor, for is not the gain all his own? Does he not toil from the dawn of day to the setting sun? and is not that toil given cheerfully, because it is devoted to the beloved object which is felt to be the labourer's property? Then it accumulates capital in the very class which is most hopeless and most degraded in large-farming England. It may be true that it presents few signs of expensive farming to the eye; it shows no steam-ploughs, no clod-crushers, or huge thrashing-machines; but labour freely given more than compensates for the want of ingenious implements. It is true, again, that the Flemish farmers and labourers seldom eat meat except on Sundays and in harvest; buttermilk and potatoes, with brown bread, is their daily food. But the reply is easy and triumphant. This is economical living upon system; it is a resolute and successful determination to acquire capital. Their hearts are set on buying land, and no sacrifice is too costly to gratify the darling passion. First of all and greatest of virtues, peasant-proprietorship solves the problem of population, the most perplexing which the economical philosopher has to encounter. It prevents marriage, or renders it relatively unfruitful. It keeps down the numbers of the people, and thus affords the means for every one being well off and comfortable. Hence no country is so beautiful to traverse as a land of peasant-proprietors. The teeming fields on

every side bear witness to the care and the culture, the productiveness of the farming, and the universal happiness of the inhabitants. What, then, has intelligent England to do but to retrace her steps, to return to her forgotten past, to battle against her unnatural relation of landlord and tenant, and to convert her people into thrifty, energetic, and prosperous owners of her soil?

Such are some of the praises which have been passionately sung of peasant-proprietors, and which are repeated with increased vigour by many excellent and philanthropical men. Above all, at the present hour, is the system whose success abroad is so strongly vaunted, urged upon statesmen as the panacea for the woes of Ireland. Now, to investigate on the spot the merits of foreign farming, and to test by personal inspection the value of these eulogies, was one of the chief objects of Mr Howard's travels on the Continent. His report bears, as we see, on some of the most critical questions of our time; and, if accurate, is plainly of the utmost value. As to its accuracy, none who have not enjoyed equal opportunities of observation can speak with positive certainty; but certain qualities transparently shine in this Address, which cannot fail to inspire confidence. Mr Howard enumerates a number of localities—he gives names in connection with minute and specific statements—he quotes persons of eminence and ability; in a word, he furnishes very strong guarantees of trustworthiness. What is the evidence, then, which we obtain from Mr Howard?

The first impression is unfavourable to the foreigner. An English farmer might naturally infer from what he saw between Calais and Paris that the whole country was going to the bad; but Mr Howard reassures him. Improvement is not extinct; it is slow, but still in motion, as is proved by several large establishments which Mr Howard visited in this region.

But we need not dwell on M. Decrombecque with his farm of 1200 acres, nor on our old acquaintance, M. Cail, with his gigantic establishment. Their success does not bear on the point we are discussing, although it shows that in the favoured land of peasant-proprietors great farms may spring up and reach enormous proportions. The remark of M. Leconteux is more to the purpose—"That the peasantry and small proprietors are possessed by the *démon* of property in land." "They buy land," says Mr Howard, "and have no capital to work it with." Yet these small farmers preponderate in the greater part of France. Thousands of one, two, and three acre farms are held by peasants, who fill up their time by working for the large farmers. As ten acres are the minimum estimated necessary for the maintenance of a farmer and his family, it is clear that these small men are not in the beatitude described by Mr Mill. They are mainly labourers with a freehold garden and paddock—a very valuable addition to their welfare, if considered as supplementary resources to simple wages, but certainly not the foundation of a general system of agriculture. To live they must obtain employment, and this implies the coexistence of occupiers of land possessed of ranges far exceeding their own. Such farms are not a restoration of small farming; nor does the yoking together of a horse, a bull, and an ass suggest very efficient agriculture. However, they exhibit the merit claimed for them by Mr Mill. "These—the very small farmers—work from sunrise to sunset, doing double the work for themselves they would for an employer, and they live far harder than English peasants. They are sober, live very hard, scrape together every penny they can lay hands upon, with a view to becoming one of the hard-working, hard-living farmers I have described." The produce is very in-

ferior in quantity, though France is favoured with a finer climate and a better soil than what obtain in England. It is certain that under such management the land produces far less beyond what the cultivators of the soil themselves consume, than under the ordinary English tenure. The little farmer has no greater enjoyments, if so many, as the English labourer, and he provides much less for the sustenance of the whole French people. In what, then, does the gain of this mode of life consist? The French peasant-proprietor has harder work, inferior fare for the most part, and produces less for the community, than the average English labourer. If that is a desirable form of existence, in what does its superiority reside? If there is superiority—though we should rather term it compensation for material inferiority—it is found in the satisfaction of ownership, in the sense of being in some degree independent, and in the hope and prospect of saving enough to buy more land. We do not wish for a moment to undervalue such a feeling; yet we see by what heavy material sacrifices it is purchased, and what little practical good it brings to the man and to his family. To toil from four in the morning till eight in the evening, to live on the most scanty fare, to be destitute of the comforts of civilisation, solely to have some prospect of acquiring an increase of property in land, is a state of existence scarcely to be envied. And by the side of such owners of property, and such a manner of spending life, be it carefully remembered, are the labourers, the workmen for hire, whom we have described above. The whole group combined presents a picture of a life which can scarcely be considered as realising the ideal which has been painted in such vivid colours.

But let us now pass on to Belgium, the paradise of a certain school of political economists. Mr Howard

entered it with eager expectation. He had heard of its fame, of the glowing descriptions which Mr Mill and his friends had given of its agriculture. He was plunged at once into disappointment. The signs of industry and care in cultivation were apparent on every side; but the means of developing the resources of the land were wanting. Capital was absent, though found in prosperous application on the large beetroot farms, the counterparts of English tillage, and doubtless deserving on that account of scientific reprobation. Except on these large farms, the yield of Belgian agriculture falls decidedly below the English level. However, a new claim has been lately raised on its behalf, which goes far to turn the scale. Mr Hoskyns, M.P., has recently stated in the 'Times,' that "the number of beasts fed, and meat produced per acre, is far greater in Belgium than in England." We confess that we were startled by the remark, it was so novel, so subversive of all our previous conceptions. We longed for an explanation of a fact so surprising, and yet announced with such positiveness. It is furnished by Mr Howard, and we shall be excused for quoting it: "It is true that Belgium has 1,257,269 head of cattle, which is larger in proportion than the stock of English cattle. But to come to the conclusion from such a fact that the Belgian meat-supply is greater than ours is a fallacy, as I will show. In the first place, the draught power in oxen in this country is infinitesimal; in Belgium it forms a large proportion. In England, as soon as a bullock is big enough he is slaughtered, whilst in Belgium he is kept on for years for draught purposes. Again, note the startling fact, that whilst Belgium has but some half-million of sheep we have over 35 millions, to say nothing of the superior size and weight of our animals. I feel convinced that, were

we in possession of full and reliable statistics, it would be conclusively proved that England produces far more meat per acre than any country in the world, with perhaps the exception of the rich-growing land of Holland. With the best information, then, at my command, and altogether waiving the question as to the number of oxen and cows kept in Belgium for draught purposes, I make the total quantity of meat raised per acre to be only 98 pounds in Belgium against 148 pounds in England and Wales. Except upon the large farms, very little stock is to be seen." These figures bring out a very clear superiority on the English side. It will be still more decided if the element, the cattle kept for draught, which is here omitted, is taken into account, especially when it is remembered that only one-half of Belgium, if indeed so much, is occupied by peasant-proprietorship. The pretension that small peasant landowners rear such a quantity of cattle as not only supplies abundant meat to the mart, but also attests efficiency and productiveness of agriculture, obtains no confirmation from the appeal to facts.

What Mr Howard proclaims is corroborated by the testimony of other witnesses of equal competence and skill. Mr Read predicted in the House of Commons the refutation which personal observation enabled Mr Howard to bring on Mr Wren Hoskyns's assertion. Dr Voelcker speaks in the same strain. Fifteen years ago he made an agricultural tour in Belgium, and recently again he has made another in company with Mr Jenkins, the Secretary of the Royal Agricultural Society. He has discovered but little progress in Belgium during these fifteen years. Some improvement might be discerned in pigs and horned cattle, but no increase in the growth of corn had been effected. Dr Voelcker then adds a sentence which we commend to the attention of Mr Mill. "One

of the greatest compliments that he had ever seen paid to British agriculture, was the astonishment expressed by some of the more intelligent men with whom we came in contact, that two persons should have come over from England to see what they were doing there. They could not understand it; and several of them said, 'All that we have learnt of good agriculture we have picked up either directly by going to England, or by reading English agricultural publications.'"

There are other considerations of great weight, which must be taken into account in passing a judgment on *la petite culture*—the system of small proprietorships. Pre-eminent amongst these are the two tendencies to subdivide and to incur debt. When small properties occupy a whole county, they leave but a scanty demand for labour. We have seen how low is the rate of wages found in the neighbourhood of small peasants abroad. If large manufactures are not at hand to carry off the excess of the population, the father of the family has no other resource but to subdivide his land amongst his children. Thus the holding is gradually reduced in size, till it reaches the limit when the farm can just afford subsistence. Mr Howard has told us of numerous cases where the cottier is compelled to supplement, by working for hire, the inadequate living he can extract from his land. Belgium, France, Ireland, and other countries, furnish striking instances of this tendency. It is calculated to check, no doubt, the growth of the population, and this is claimed by Mr Mill as a merit. But does Mr Mill mean to tell us that a host of cottier proprietors, living on the scantiest minimum of subsistence, rearing only two children to replace the parents, and developing no increase of production, is a healthier, sounder, more desirable condition of life than that of pure agricultural labourers, raising ever-expand-

ing supplies of food, and, in spite of many drawbacks, earning satisfactory wages? For our own part, we do not hesitate to express our preference for the cottier system. There is less suffering in the present, and far greater hope in the future.

Equally mischievous is the irrepressible tendency to debt. The weight of superincumbent mortgages is the load which depresses French agriculture, which exacts from it periodical cries of distress, and extorts from the French Government successive commissions of inquiry. The one ambition of the French peasant is to buy more land. Mr Howard mentions such sums as £192 given for an acre of ground. The peasant will live for years on the barest and hardest fare which will support life, and then draw from the ground hoards of coin for the acquisition of more acres. So keen is this passion, that he will mortgage deeply what he has to obtain more; and at this moment a very large portion of French land belongs to mortgagees who dwell in towns. One of the worst features of such a practice is the stinting agriculture of the capital necessary for its development. What the peasant longs for is to own more land, and not to increase his wealth and happiness by a more intelligent and superior cultivation of what he already possesses. Can it be a matter of wonder that Dr Voelcker, Mr Howard, and other observers, perceive so little progress in the lands of small proprietors? On the other hand, English farming is achieving new triumphs. The yield of wheat per acre is steadily rising all over England. Processes are adopted which combine economy with efficiency. The farmer produces more, and is richer; and it is certain that the more successful the farming, the better, as a rule, is the condition of the labourer. The French peasant-landlord, in endless cases, is paralysed by debt. He owns more land,

but his savings have been exhausted in the purchase-money, and he has little capital for cultivating his new acquisitions with efficiency. Thus he is loaded with debt, and is poor amidst landed riches. On the other hand, the relation of the farmer to agriculture is radically bad and unsound. The means for progress are wanting; the yield of the land remains below the power of producing conferred upon it by nature. The country suffers, and so does the cultivator; both are placed in an unnatural position. The wealth of the country stands below its true level; there is less for all. Food is dearer than it ought to be, to the injury of every class. If there is a sound and incontestable principle which governs the practice of agriculture, it is that the capital available for tillage should be proportionate to the capabilities of the land. This is the ideal. Every system is sound which makes constant approaches to this ideal; every system is bad, and calls for reform, which forgets this ideal, or leads away from its realisation. The absence of a poor-law greatly aggravates the evil; for it strengthens the desire to acquire more land as the safeguard against destitution. A poor cottier with a couple of acres, with no other resource than to eke out the insufficient maintenance he obtains from them by the wretched wages we have described, cannot help longing for the acquisition of more acres by the help of mortgage. The set of the tide of the agricultural mind throughout the nation is directed to additional purchases, in which the capital requisite for efficient cultivation is of small account. An unprogressive agriculture is the inevitable result; and it is very plain to us that, were it not for the growth of large farms, fostered by the cultivation of the beetroot, and its manufacture on the farm into sugar, the tardy advance of French and Flemish farming would move at a still feebler rate.

A remedy may possibly be found for some of these evils in co-operation. The application of this principle has already commenced in central France, with the view of meeting the increasing deficiency of agricultural labourers. The efficiency of co-operation resides in the means it furnishes of employing superior implements of culture. By its help the small farmer may have access to a better plough, a steam thrashing-machine, and similar appliances. The man who cannot keep a horse may obtain, through co-operation, the services of his richer neighbour's team. Drainage, too, becomes of easier execution. The concert of a number of co-proprietors, owning a drainage-basin in common, may be obtained when they are working its fields together, while it might be unobtainable without co-operation. We cheerfully admit that such a method of joint action would give a new aspect to many of the present features of *la petite culture*. Some of its most characteristic disadvantages would disappear, others would be practically mitigated. But if such a system of agriculture could be successfully established, it would be in substance a combination of large farming with small. The main impediments to its establishment, we conceive, would be moral. A large number of proprietors, invested with individual rights which they could enforce at will, seems to us, we confess, an institution little suited for a large country. It contains a special difficulty, from which co-operation in a trade is exempt. If a partner in a co-operative store or mill chooses to withdraw, his place can be supplied as efficiently by another. The association is in no danger of dissolution because any particular person refuses to join it. It is otherwise with agricultural co-operation. The refusal of a single land-owner might prevent altogether the execution of a great work of drainage. Then agriculture is composed of a succession

of operations whose completion extends over three or four years : under what conditions can the withdrawal of a proprietor take place ? Such withdrawals there must be—they are inherent in the free exercise of the right of property ; they would often become imperative from the death of a proprietor. Under what covenants must the land come so as to overcome the difficulty ? We cannot easily picture to ourselves what they ought to be upon a system which would deserve to be called national, or even general. We do not see, therefore, speaking of broad regions, that co-operation can be carried much farther than working a common district by all the labourers in it combined, and the use by the smaller men of the large implements possessed by those of greater means ; and then some of the distinctive excellences of peasant-proprietorship will be lost. Those who are tilling the lands of their neighbours will measure their hours of toil in the same manner as hired labourers ; and substantially the chief elements of such a method, when successfully at work, will be those of large farming.

We have used the expression “ the distinctive excellences ” of small farming, and we desire to recognise them most clearly. The owner of a small plot of land does work with a care, a perseverance, and an ungrudging bestowal of his time and labour, which cannot be found in an agriculture whose operations are carried out on a great scale. But here we come upon a principle which has not been duly estimated by political economists. The merits of small farming have been exclusively attributed to the element of ownership. It is because the land is his own, it is said, that the peasant-proprietor works so hard and so unceasingly. The fact of the excellence displayed we admit ; the theory of the secret in which its virtue dwells we hold to be erroneous. The proof of our

assertion is, in our opinion, easy and decisive. Small cultivators, who are not owners of the soil on which their labour is expended, exhibit the same characteristics. Their labour is as untiring, their care and watchfulness as active, the absence of all calculation of the length of the day's work as marked, and the results at the last as fruitful. In Scotland and elsewhere, tenants have reclaimed waste lands with an energy as powerful as any shown by peasant-proprietors. They have had leases long enough to secure to them such fruits of their industry as shall repay the efforts they have made ; still they are tenants, and not proprietors. The length of the lease, it may be said—a lease, of course, founded on a trifling rent—has placed them for the time in the position of peasant-proprietors. This is true ; yet the distinction is very important. It proves, on the one side, that the concession of the land in full or imperfect proprietorship is one of the most effective instruments available for the reduction of wastes into cultivated fields ; but it equally shows, on the other, that a suitable lease will perform this work as successfully as ownership, and that the compulsory substitution of proprietorship for tenancy is not necessary for securing these particular benefits.

But the evidence is not confined to the reclamation of wastes. There is a yet more decisive field in which the quality of small tenancies may be tested. There are many holdings still existing in England, in which the man of 40 acres has to compete with him who has 400, or even 1000. And what does experience tell here ? That the small tenant is crushed to the earth ; that he is struck down in the competition with the skill and science of the great farmer ; and that he and his brethren are in process of extinction ? Very far from it. The yeomen, the small proprietors, the statesmen of Westmoreland and Cumberland, are dis-

appearing, beyond doubt. They do not hold their own in this modern England of our day. But the cause is not their inability to cultivate their land with profit: they succumb to the temptation of selling. They are unable to resist the glittering shine of high prices. Rich men can afford, and have the will to offer them, prices for their acres which are out of all proportion to the profits of their own agriculture. Their small estates are bought up by rich land-owners, who add field to field, and trust to their posterity receiving compensation for the present sacrifice. In still larger numbers they pass into building-plots, whose beauty commands the open purses of eager purchasers. The extinction of the yeomen has but a slight connection with the condition of agriculture in England; it does not demonstrate the impossibility of small farms being cultivated with success, even under the pressure of the severe competition of large ones. Evidence may be found in all directions to make good this assertion. Small tenancies do thrive in abundance; they not only pay their way, but they work often on equal terms with their great neighbours. We are ourselves acquainted with such minor holdings of some 40 or 50 acres. We have seen on them crops as flourishing as on the most famed farms of the kingdom — cattle and sheep as abundant, and rent as high and as punctually paid. We know of a very high agricultural authority who has declared that it is not these small tenants, but those who are intermediate between them and the great farmers, who exhibit the least satisfactory results. Landlords within our knowledge, men who have dealt with their property on strict principles of business, sustain these small holdings as sound agricultural arrangements; and what leads to their success? These small tenants cannot possess large teams of horses, for they have no constant employment for them

which shall defray their cost; they do not own great agricultural implements, much less have they capital or skill for important experiments and improvements. How, then, do they hold their own? By the very virtues which Mr Mill has celebrated so enthusiastically in peasant-proprietors: by the conspicuous devotion of their own time and labour; by their presence in the field by the side of the labourers they employ; by working long days when rain threatens the hay crop; by the turning of the master's eye to every detail of the petty holding. These are the qualities which enable them to cultivate with as large a production, and with inferior cost to the great farmers. It is true that no one can contemplate the practicability of converting all England into such farms. Their success implies the neighbourhood of bigger men, and of their resources. They need to borrow horses for ploughing at times; they must have recourse to the thrashing and winnowing machines of their neighbours; and if cultivation by steam advances, they will require the occasional help of implements which are not their own. When these resources exist, we say fearlessly that small farms prosper, both for landlord and tenant. The secret of their wellbeing lies in the moderate size of the holding, which admits of its being superintended by the farmer in person, and of being in no small degree worked by his own hands. And thus these small tenancies bring out a scientific result of great value. They correct and change a great chapter in political economy. They efface a one-sided and passionate explanation of a fact by substituting the true for an imaginary cause. They proclaim that it is not necessary for the man who cultivates a small farm to be its owner in order to produce the results which excite admiration. They point out the identity of position between the small proprietor

and the small tenant. They prove that it is the small size of the area tilled which generates success, by enabling the personal qualities of the cultivator to bear directly on every process of the agriculture. And in England they have this distinguishing merit, that whilst the small statesman is unable to resist the allurements of a strong purchaser of his land, the small tenant may thrive, and continue as long as agriculture shall last.

Another merit of these small tenancies possesses extreme importance in our eyes. They supply the vacuum between the labourer and the richer agriculturists. They shed the ray of hope upon his toil; they cheer him with the prospect of advancement; and they conciliate his affection for the walk in life which Providence has marked out for him. The social value of such intermediate steps cannot be well exaggerated. It is true that the difficulty of providing adequate capital for cultivation is considerable, but it is not insuperable. That difficulty must effec-

tually prevent small tenancies from being the main instrument of agriculture; but no one who is acquainted with the rural districts of England can doubt that instances abound where small men, even labourers, possess a sagacity in discerning and a thrift in saving which lay the foundations of a real rise in life. The kindness of a landlord may contribute very effective aid at times. But we cannot and do not rest on such sentiments as a trustworthy element of a business relation. It is a vast matter that these narrow holdings offer to many a rescue from hopeless and stationary poverty; and the effects generated in the minds of the most intelligent and the most aspiring cannot fail to spread themselves over the whole mass. The condition of a healthy profession, embracing large masses of mankind, is the penetration of life and progress to its lowest members; and this invaluable blessing, we are persuaded, a judicious admixture of small with large tenancies can supply.

JOHN.—PART III.

CHAPTER VIII.

"MISS CREDITON," said John Mitford, drawing a long breath, "you don't know what a very serious question that is; it has been my burden for half my life. I have never spoken of it to any one, and you have taken me a little by surprise. I'd like to tell you all about it, but you—would not care to hear."

"Indeed I should," said Kate, eagerly. "Oh, I do so hope you have not quite made up your mind. It would be such a sacrifice. Fanshawe Regis is very nice—but to be buried here all your life, and never to take part in anything, nor to have any way of rising in the world, or improving your position! If I were a man, I would rather be anything than a clergyman. It is like making a ghost of yourself at the beginning of your life."

"A ghost of myself?" said John.

"Yes—of course it just comes to that; other men will go on and on while you remain behind," cried Kate. "I could not bear it. *That* Fred Huntley, for example—he is reading for the bar, I believe, and he is clever, and he will be Lord Chancellor, or something, while you are only Rector of Fanshawe Regis. That is what I could not bear."

John shook his head, softly bending over her more and more, with a gesture which was half pity. "That is not my feeling," he said. "I don't think you would care for that either if you looked into it more. Huntley has more brains than I have; he will always rise higher if he takes the trouble—but I don't care for that. The thing is—but, Miss Crediton, it would bore you to listen to such a long story; suppose we go in to my mother—she knows nothing about my vain thoughts, thank heaven!"

"Oh no, no," said Kate, clinging still closer to his arm; "tell me everything—I shall not be bored. That is, if you will—if you don't mind trusting me."

"Trusting you!" It was curious how much more impressive his voice was, coming out of the darkness. His awkwardness, his diffidence, everything that made him look commonplace in the daylight, had disappeared. Kate felt a little thrill, half of excitement, half of pride. Yes, he would trust her, though nobody else (he said) in all the world. It was not John that thus moved her; it was the sense of being the one selected and chosen—one out of a hundred—one out of the world—which is the sweetest flattery which can be addressed to man or woman. She looked up to him, though he could not see her, raising that face which John already felt was the sweetest in the world. And he bent over her, and her little hand trembled on his arm, and the darkness wrapped them round and round, so that they could not see each other's faces—the very moment and the very circumstances which make it sweet to confide and to be confided in. It was not yet ten days since he had seen her first, and she had not as yet shown the least trace of a character likely to understand his, and yet he was ready to trust her with the deepest secrets of his heart.

"It is not that," said John. "I am sure you are not the one to bid a man forsake his duty that he might rise in the world. If I were as sure about everything I ought to believe as—as my father is, I should go into the Church joyfully to-morrow."

"Should you?" said Kate, feeling chilled in spite of herself.

"I should ; and you would approve me for doing so, I know," he said, earnestly. "But don't think me worse than I am, Miss Crediton. I am not a sceptic nor an infidel, that you should draw away from me. Yes, you did, ever so little—but if it had only been a hair-breadth, I should have felt it. It is not so much that I doubt—but I can't feel sure of things. My father is sure of everything ; that is the superiority of the older generations. They knew what they believed, and so they were ready to go to the stake for it—"

"Or send other people to the stake," said Kate. The conversation was getting so dreadfully serious that she turned it where she could to the side of laughter ; but it was not possible in this case.

"Yes, I know," he said, softly, altogether ignoring her lightertone ; "the one thing implies the other. I acknowledge it does ; we are such confused creatures. But as for me, I could neither die for my belief nor make any one else die. I don't feel sure. I say to myself, how do you know he is wrong and you are right ? How do I know ? But you see my father knows ; and most of the old people in the village are just as certain as he. Is it because we are young, I wonder ?" said John.

"Oh, don't speak like that—pray don't. Why should it be because we are young ?"

"That I can't tell," said John, in the darkness. "It might be out of opposition, perhaps, because they are so sure—so sure—cruelly sure, I often think. But when a man has to teach others, I suppose that is how he ought to be ; and my very soul shrinks, Miss Crediton—"

"Yes ?"

"You will not say anything to my mother ? She has brought me up for it, and set her heart on it, and I would not fail her for the world."

"But, Mr John," said Kate, "I

don't understand ; if you are not a—I mean, if you don't believe—the Bible—should you be a clergyman for any other reason ? Indeed I don't understand."

"No," he said, vehemently ; "you are right and I am wrong. I ought not, I know. But then I am not sure that I don't believe. I think I do. I believe man must be taught to serve God. I believe that He comforts them in their distress. You are too true, too straightforward, too innocent to know. I believe and I don't believe. But the thing is, how can I teach, how can I pronounce with authority, not being sure ?—that is what stops me."

Kate stopped too, being perplexed. "I don't like the thought of your being a clergyman," she said, with what would have been, could he have seen it, a pleading look up into his face.

And then a long sigh came from John's breast. She heard that, but she did not know that he shook his head as well ; and in her ignorance she went on.

"You would be so much better doing anything else. Of course, if you had had a very strong disposition for it—but when you have not. And you would do so very much better for yourself. If you were to give it up—"

"Give it up !" cried John ; "the only work that is worth doing on earth !"

"But, good heavens ! Mr Mitford, what do you mean, for I don't understand you ? If it is the only work worth doing on earth, why do you persuade people you don't mean to do it ? I don't understand."

"Where is there any other work worth doing ?" said John. "I don't want to be a soldier, which might mean something. Could I be a doctor, pretending to know how to cure people of their illnesses—or a lawyer, taking any side he is paid for ? No, that is the only work worth doing : to devote one's whole

life to the service of men—to save them, mend them, bring them from the devil to God. Where is there any such work? And yet I pause here on the threshold, all for a defect of nature. I know you are despising me in your heart.”

“No, no,” said Kate, quite bewildered. She did not despise him; on the contrary, it just gleamed across her mind that here was something she had no comprehension of—something she had never met with before. “Mr John, it is you who will think me very stupid. But I don’t understand you,” she said, with a certain humility. The answer he made was involuntary. He had no right to do it on such short acquaintance—a mere stranger, you might say. He pressed to his side with unconscious tenderness the hand that rested on his arm.

“You don’t understand such pitiful weakness,” he said. “You would see what was right and do it, without lingering and hesitating. I know you would. Don’t be angry with me. We two are nearer each other than anybody else can be—are not we? We were very near for one moment, like one life; and we might have died so—together. That should make us very close—very close—friends.”

“Oh, Mr John.”

“Don’t cry. I should not have reminded you,” he said, with sudden compunction. “I am so selfish; but you said you felt as if—I belonged to you. So I do—to be your servant—your—anything you please. And that is why I tell you all this weakness of mine, because it was just a chance that we did not die in a moment—together. Oh, hush, hush! I said it to rouse myself, and because it was so sweet. I forgot it must be terrible to you.”

“I—I understand,” said Kate, with a sob. “It makes us like—brother and sister. But I never can do anything like that for you. I can only help you with—a little

sympathy; but you shall always have that—as if you were—my brother. Oh, never doubt it. I am glad you have told me—I shall know you better now.”

“And here I have gone and made her cry like a selfish beast,” said John. “Just one more walk round—and lean heavier on me, and I will not say another word to vex you—not one.”

“I am not vexed,” said Kate, with a soft little smile among her tears, which somehow diffused itself into the darkness, one could not tell how. He felt it warm him and brighten him, though he could not see it; and thus they made one silent round, pausing for a moment where the lilies stood up in that tall pillar, glimmering through the night and breathing out sweetness. John, whose heart was full of all unspeakable things, came to a moment’s pause before them, though he was faithful to his promise, and did not speak. Some angel seemed to be by, saying *Ave*, as in that scene which the old painters always adorn with the stately flower of Mary. John believed all the poets had said of women at that moment, in the sweetness of the summer dark. Hail, woman, full of grace! The whole air was full of angelic salutation. But it was he, the man, who had the privilege of supporting her, of protecting her, of saving her in danger. Thus the young man raved, with his heart full. And Kate in the silence, leaning on his arm, dried her tears, and trembled with a strange mixture of courage and perplexity and emotion. And then she wondered what Mrs Mitford would say.

Mrs Mitford said nothing when the two came in by the open window, with eyes dazzled by the sudden entrance into the light. Kate’s eyes were more dazzling than the lamp, if anybody had looked at them. The tears were dry, but they had left a humid radiance behind, and the fresh

night air had ruffled the gold in her hair, and heightened the colour on her cheeks, which betrayed the commotion within. Mrs Mitford made no special remark, except that she feared the tea was cold, and that she had just been about to ring to have it taken away. "You must have tired her wandering so long about the garden. You should not be thoughtless, John," said his mother; "and it is almost time for prayers."

"It was my fault," said Kate; "it was so pleasant out of doors, and quiet, and sweet. I am sorry we have kept you waiting. I did not know it was so late."

"Oh, my dear, I do not mind," said Mrs Mitford, smothering a half-sigh; for, to be sure, she had been alone all the time while they were wandering among the lilies; and she was not used to it—yet. "But Dr Mitford is very particular about the hour for prayers, and you must make haste, like a good child, with your tea. I never like to put him out."

"Oh, not for the world!" cried Kate; and she swallowed the cold tea very hurriedly, and went for Dr Mitford's books, and arranged them on the table with her own hands; and then she came softly behind John's mother, and gave her a kiss, as light as if a rose-leaf had blown against her cheek. She did not offer any explanation of this sudden caress, but seated herself close by Mrs Mitford, and clasped her hands in her lap like a young lady in a picture of family devotion; and then Dr Mitford's boots were heard to creak along the long passage which led from his study, and the bell was rung for prayers.

This conversation gave Kate a great deal to think about when she went up-stairs. John's appeal to her had gone honestly to her heart. She was touched by it in quite a different way from what she would have been had he been making love. "Yes, indeed, we do belong to each other—he saved my life,"

she said to herself; "we ought always to be like—brother—and sister." When she said it, she felt in her heart of hearts that this did not quite state the case; but let it be, to save trouble. And then she tried to reflect upon the confession he had made to her. But that was more difficult. Kate was far better acquainted with ordinary life than John. She would have behaved like an accomplished woman of the world in an emergency which would have turned him at once into a heavy student or awkward country lad; but in other matters she was a baby beside him. She had never thought at all on the subjects which had occupied his mind for years. And she was thunder-struck by his hesitation. Could it be that people out of books really thought and felt so? Could it be? She was so perplexed that she could not draw herself out of the maze. She reflected with all her might upon what she ought to do and say to him; but could not by any means master his difficulty. He must either decide to be a clergyman or not to be a clergyman—that was the distinct issue; and if he could, by any sort of pressure put upon him, be made to give up the notion, that would be so much the better. Going into the Church because he had been brought up to it, and because his friends desired it, was a motive perfectly comprehensible to Kate. But then had not she, whatever might come of it, stolen into his confidence closer than any of his friends? and it was his own life he had to decide upon; and, in the course of nature, he must after a while detach himself from his father and mother, and live according to his own judgment, not by theirs. If she could move him (being, as he said, so close to him) to choose a manner of life which would be far better for him than the Church, would not that be exercising her influence in the most satisfactory way? As for the deeper

question, it puzzled her so much, that after one or two efforts she gave it up. The progress of advanced opinions has been sufficiently great to render it impossible even for a fashionable young lady not to be aware of the existence of "doubts;" but what did he mean by turning round upon her in that incomprehensible way, and talking of "the only work worth doing," just after he had taken refuge in that sanctuary of uncertainty which every man, if he likes, has a right to shelter himself in? To have doubts was comprehensible, too; but to have doubts and yet to think a clergyman's work the only work worth doing! Kate's only refuge was to allow to herself that he was a strange, a very strange fellow; was he a little—cracked?—was he trying to bewilder her? "Anyhow, he is nice," Kate said to herself; and that covered a multitude of sins.

Meanwhile John, poor fellow, went out after they had all gone up-stairs, and had a long walk by himself in the night, to tone himself down a little from the exaltation of the moment in which he had told her that he and she had almost died together. There was the strangest subtle sweetness to himself in the thought. To have actually died with her, and for her, seemed to him, in his foolishness, as if it would have been so sweet. And then he felt that he had opened his heart to her, and that she knew all his thoughts. He had told them to her in all their inconsistency, in all their confusion, and she had understood. So he thought. He went out in the fervour of his youth through the darkling paths, and brushed along the hedges, all crisp with dew, and said to himself that henceforth one creature at least in the world knew what he meant. His feelings were such as have not been rare in England for half a century back. He had been trained, as it were, in the bosom of the Church, and natural filial reverence,

and use and wont, had blinded him to the very commonplace character of its labours as fulfilled by his father. His father was—his father; a privileged being, whose actions had not yet come within the range of things to be discussed. And the young man's mind was full of the vague enthusiasm and exaltation which belong to his age. Ideally, was not the work of a Christian priest the only work in the world? A life devoted to the help and salvation of one's fellow-creatures for here and for hereafter—no enterprise could be so noble, none so important. And must he relinquish that, because he felt it difficult to pronounce with authority, "without doubt he shall perish everlastingly"? Must he give up the only purely disinterested labour which man can perform for man—the art of winning souls, of ameliorating the earth, of cleansing its hidden corners, and brightening its melancholy face? No, he could not give it up; and yet, on the other hand, how could he utter certain words, how make certain confessions, how take up that for his faith which was not his faith? John's heart had been wrung in many a melancholy hour of musing with this struggle, which was so very different from Kate's conception of his difficulties. But now there stole into the conflict a certain sweetness—it was, that he was understood. Some one stood by him now, silently backing him, silently following him up,—perhaps with a shy hand on his arm; perhaps—who could tell?—with a shy hand in his, ere long. It did not give him any help in resolving his grand problem, but it was astonishing how it sweetened it. He walked on and on, not knowing how far he went, with a strange sense that life was changed—that he was another man. It seemed as if new light must come to him after this sudden enhancement of life and vigour. Was it true that there were two now to struggle instead of one? John was not far

enough gone to put such a question definitely in words to himself, but it lingered about the avenues of his mind, and sweet whispers of response seemed to breathe over him. Two, and not one! and he was understood, and his difficulties appreciated; and surely now the guiding light at last must come.

His mother heard him come in, as she lay awake thinking of him, and wondered why he should go out so late, and whether he had shut the door, and thanked heaven his father was fast asleep, and did not hear him; for Dr Mitford would have become alarmed had he heard of such nocturnal walks—first, for John's morals, lest he should have found some unlawful attraction in the village; and, second, for the plate, if the house was known to be deprived of one of its defenders. His anxious mother, though she had thought of little else since his birth except John's ways and thoughts, had yet no inkling of anything deeper that might be in his mind. That he might love Kate, and that Kate might play with him as a cat plays with a mouse—encourage him for her own amusement while she stayed at Fanshawe Regis, and throw him off as soon as she left—that was Mrs Mitford's only fear respecting him. It was so painful that it kept her from sleeping. She could not bear to think of any one so wounding, so misappreciating, her boy. If she but knew him as I know him, she would go down on her knees and thank God for such a man's love, she said to herself in the darkness, drying her soft eyes. But how was his mother—a witness whose impartiality nobody would believe in—to persuade the girl of this? And Mrs Mitford was a true woman, and ranked a "disappointment" at a very high rate among the afflictions of men. And it was very, very grievous to her to think of this little coquette trifling with her son, and giving the poor boy a heartbreak. She was nearly tempted half-a-dozen

times to get up and throw her dressing-gown about her, and make her way through the slumbering house, and through the ghostly moonlight which fell broadly in from the staircase-window upon the corridor, to Kate's room, to rouse her out of her sleep, and shake her, and say, "Oh you careless, foolish, naughty little Kate! You will never get the chance of such another, if you break my boy's heart." It would have been very, very foolish of her had she done so; and yet that was the impulse in her mind. But it never occurred to Mrs Mitford that when he took that long, silent, dreary walk, he might be thinking of something else of even more importance than Kate's acceptance or refusal. She had watched him all his life, day by day and hour by hour, and yet she had never realised such a possibility. So she lay thinking of him, and wondering when he would come back, and heard afar off the first faint touch of his foot on the path, and felt her heart beat with satisfaction, and hoped he would lock the door; but never dreamed that his long wandering out in the dark could have any motive or object except the first love which filled his heart with restlessness, and all a young man's passionate fears and hopes. Thank heaven! his father slept always as sound as a top, and could not hear.

Poor Mrs Mitford! how bitter it would have been to her could she have realised that Kate was lying awake also, and heard him come in, and knew what he was thinking of better than his mother did! "Poor boy!" Kate murmured to herself, between asleep and awake, as she heard his step; "I must speak to him *seriously* to-morrow." There was a certain self-importance in the thought; for it is pleasant to be the depository of such confidences, and to know you have been chosen out of all the world to have the secret of a life confided to you. The difference was that

Kate, after this little speech to herself, fell very fast asleep, and remembered very little of it when she woke in the morning. But Mrs Mitford's mind was so full that she could neither give up the subject nor go to sleep. As for the Doctor, good man, he heard nothing and thought of nothing, and had never awakened to the fact that John was likely to bring any disturbance whatever into his life. Why should anything happen to him more than to other people? Dr Mitford would have said; and even the love-story would not have excited him. Thus the son of the

house stole in, in the darkness, with his candle in his hand, through the shut-up silent dwelling, passing softly by his mother's door not to wake her, with the fresh air still blowing in his face, and the whirl of feeling within, uncalmed even by fatigue and the exertion he had been making. And the two women waked and listened, opening their eyes in the dark that they might hear the better—a very, very usual domestic scene; but the men who are thus watched and listened for are seldom such innocent men as John.

CHAPTER IX.

Some time passed after this eventful evening before Kate had any opportunity of making the assault upon John's principles which she proposed to herself. There were some days of tranquil peaceful country life, spent in doing nothing particular—in little walks taken under the mother's eye—in an expedition to St Biddulph's, the whole little party together, in which, though Dr Mitford took the office of cicerone for Kate's benefit, there was more of John than of his father. This kind of intercourse which threw them continually together, yet never left them alone to undergo the temptation of saying too much, promoted the intimacy of the two young people in the most wonderful way. They were each other's natural companions, each other's most lively sympathisers. The father and the mother stood on a different altitude, were looked up to, respected perhaps, perhaps softly smiled at in the expression of their antiquated opinions; but the young man and the young woman were on the same level, and understood each other. As for poor John, he gave himself up absolutely to the spell. He had never been so long in the society of any young woman before; his imagination had

not been frittered away by any preludes of fancy. He fell in love all at once, with all his heart and strength and mind. It was his first great emotion, and it took him not at the callow age, but when his mind (he thought) was matured, and his being had reached its full strength. He was in reality four-and-twenty, but he had felt fifty in the gravity of his thoughts; and, with all the force of his serious nature, he plunged into the extraordinary new life which opened like a garden of Paradise before him. It was all a blaze of light and splendour to his eyes. The world he had thought a sombre place enough before, full of painful demands upon his patience, his powers of self-renunciation, and capacity of self-control. But now all at once it had changed to Eden. And Kate, of whom he knew so little, was the cause.

And she, too, was falling under this natural fascination. She was very much interested in him, she said to herself. It was so sad to see such a man, so full of talent and capability, immolate himself like this. Kate felt as if she would have done a great deal to save him. She represented to herself that, if he had felt a special vocation for the Church, she would have passed

on her way and said nothing, as became a recent acquaintance ; but when he was not happy ! Was it not her duty, in gratitude to her preserver, to interfere according to her ability, and deliver him from temptation ? Yes ! she concluded it was her duty with a certain enthusiasm ; and even, if that was necessary, that she would be willing to do something to save him. She would make an exertion in his behalf, if there was anything she could do. She did not, even to herself, explain what was the anything she could do to influence John one way or another. Such details it is perhaps better to leave in darkness. But she felt herself ready to exert herself in her turn—to make an effort—what, indeed, if it were a sacrifice !—to preserve him as he had preserved her.

It was only on what was to be the day before her departure that Kate found the necessary opportunity. About a mile from Fanshawe Regis was a river which had been John's joy all his life ; and on Kate's last day, he was to be permitted the delight of introducing her to its pleasures. Mrs Mitford was to have accompanied them, but she had slackened much in her ferocity of chaperonage, and had grown used to Kate, and not so much alarmed on her account. And it was a special day at the schools, and her work was more than usual. "My dear, if you wish it, of course I will go with you," she said to her young guest ; "and you must not think me unkind to hesitate—but you are used to him now, and you will be quite safe with John. You don't mind going with John ?"

"Oh, I don't mind it at all," said Kate, with a little blush, which would have excited John's mother wonderfully two days before. But custom is a great power, and she had got used to Kate. So Mrs Mitford went to her parish work, and the two young people went out on their expedition. They had nearly a mile to walk across fields,

and then through the grateful shade of a little wood. It was a pretty road, and from the moment at which they entered the wood, the common world disappeared from about the pair. They walked like a pair in romance, often silent, sometimes with a touch of soft embarrassment, in that silent world, full of the flutter of leaves and the flitting of birds, and the notes of, here and there, 'an inquiring thrush or dramatic black-bird. Boughs would crackle and swing suddenly about them, as if some fairy had suddenly swung herself within the leafy cover. Unseen creatures—rabbits or squirrels—would dart away under the brush-wood. Arrows of sunshine came down upon the brown underground. The leaves waved green above and black in shadow, strewing the checkered path. They walked in an atmosphere of their own, in dream-land, fairyland, by the shores of old romance ; the young man bending his head in that attitude of worship, which is the attitude of protection too, towards the lower, slighter, weaker creature, who raised her eyes to his with soft supremacy. It was hers to command and his to obey. She had no more doubt of the loyalty of her vassal than he had of her sweet superiority to every other created thing. And thus they went through the wood to the river,—two undeveloped lives approaching the critical point of their existence, and going up to it in a dream of happiness, without shadow or fear.

The river ran through the wood for about a mile ; but as it is a law of English nature that no stream shall have the charm of woodland on both sides at once, the northern bank was a bit of meadowland, round which ran, at some distance, a belt of trees. Kate recovered a little from the spell of silence as she took into her hands the cords of the rudder, and looked on at her companion's struggle against the current. "It must be hard work,"

she said. "How is it you are so fond of taking trouble, you men? They say it ruins your health rowing in all those boat-races and things—all for the pleasure of beating the other colleges or the other university; and you kill yourselves for that! I should like to do it for something better worth, if it were me."

"But if you don't get the habit of the struggle, you will want training when you try for what is better worth," said John. "How one talks! I say *you*, as if by any chance you could want to struggle for anything. Pardon the profanity—I did not mean that."

"Why shouldn't I want to struggle?" said Kate, opening her eyes very wide. "I do, sometimes—that is, I don't like to be beaten; nobody does, I suppose. But hard work must be a great bore. I sit and look at my maid sometimes, and think, after all, how much superior she is to me. There she sits, stitching, stitching the whole day through, and it does not seem to do her any harm—whereas it would kill one of us. And then I order this superior being about—me, the most useless wretch! and she gets up from her work to do a hundred things for me which I could quite well do for myself. Life is very odd," said the young moralist, pulling the wrong string, and sending the boat high and dry upon a most visible bank of weeds and gravel. "Oh, Mr John, I am sure I beg your pardon! What have I done?"

"Nothing of the least importance," said John; and while Kate sat dismayed and wondering, he had plunged into the sparkling shallow stream, and pushed the fairy vessel off into its necessary depth of water. "Only pardon me for jumping in in this wild way and sprinkling your dress," he said, as he took his seat and his oars again. Kate was silent for the moment. She gazed at him with her pretty eyes, and her lips apart, wondering at the water-god; from which it

will be clear to the reader that Kate Crediton was unused to river navigation, and the ways of boating men.

"But you will catch your death of cold, and what will your mother say?" said Kate; and this danger filled her with such vivid feminine apprehensions, that it was some time before she could be consoled. And then the talk ran on about a multitude of things—about nothing in particular—while the one interlocutor steered wildly into all the difficulties possible, and the other toiled steadily against the current. It was a rapid, vehement little river, more like a Scotch or Welsh stream than a placid English one; and sometimes there were snags to be avoided, and sometimes shallows to be run upon, so that the voyage was not without excitement, with such a pilot at the helm.

But when John turned his little vessel, and it began to float down stream, the dreamy silence of the woodland walk began to steal over the two once more. "Ah! now the work is over," Kate said, with a little sigh; "yes, it is very nice to float—but then one feels as if one's own will had nothing to do with it. I begin to understand why the other is the best."

"I suppose they are both best," said John—which was not a very profound observation; and yet he sighed too. "And then it is so much easier in everything to go with the stream, and to do what you are expected to do."

"But is it right?" said Kate, with solemnity. "Ah! now I know what you are thinking about. I have so wanted to speak to you ever since *that* night. Don't you think that doing what you are expected to do would be *wrong*? I have thought so much about it——"

"Have you?" said John; and a delicious tear came to the foolish fellow's eye. "It was too good of you to think of me at all."

"Of course I could not help

thinking of you," said Kate, "after what you said. Perhaps you will not think my advice of much value; but I don't think—I don't really think you ought to do it. I feel that it would be wrong."

"There is no one in the world whose advice would be so much to me," cried foolish John. "My sight is clouded by—by self-interest, and habit, and a thousand things. I have never opened my heart to any one but you—and how I presumed to trouble you with it I can't tell," he went on, gazing at her with fond eyes, which Kate found it difficult to meet.

"Oh, that is natural enough. Don't you remember what you said?" she answered, softly; "what you did for me—and that moment when you said we might have died;—we should be like—brother and sister—all our lives."

"Not that," said John, with a little start; "but— Yes, I hold by my claim. I wish I had done something to deserve it, though. If I had known it was you—"

"How could you possibly know it was me when you did not know there was such a person as me in the world?" said Kate. "Don't talk such nonsense, please."

"Yes; was it possible that there was once a time when I did not know there was you in the world? What a cold world it must have been!—how sombre and miserable!" cried the enthusiast. "I can't realise it now."

"Oh, please, what nonsense you do talk, to be sure!" cried Kate; and then she gave her pretty head a little shake to dissipate the blush and the faint mist of some emotion that had been stealing over her eyes, and took up the interrupted strain. "Now that you do know there is a me, you must pay attention to me. I have thought over it a great deal. You must not do it—indeed you must not. A man who is not quite certain, how can he teach others? It would be like me steering—now there! Oh, I am

sure, I beg your pardon. Who was to know that nasty bank would turn up again?"

"Never mind," said John, when he had repeated the same little performance which had signalised their upward course; "that is nothing—except that it interrupted what you were saying. Tell me again what you have thought."

"But you never mean to be guided by me all the same," said Kate, incautiously, though she must have foreseen, if she had taken a moment to think, that such a remark would carry her subject too far.

"Ah! how can you say so—how can you think so?" cried John, crossing his oars across the boat, and leaning over them, with his eyes fixed upon her, "when you must know I am guided by your every look. Don't be angry with me. It is so hard to look at you and not say all that is in my heart. If you would let me think that I might—identify myself altogether—I mean, do only what pleased you—I mean, think of you as caring a little—"

"I care a great deal," said Kate, with sudden temerity, taking the words out of his mouth, "or why should I take the trouble to say so much about it? I consider that we are—brother and sister; and that gives me a sort of right to speak. Stay till I have done, Mr John. Don't you think you could be of more use in the world, if you were in the world and not out of it? Now think! Looking at it in your way, no doubt, it is very fine to be a clergyman; but you can only talk to people and persuade them, you know, and don't have it in your power to do very much for them. Now look at a rich man like papa. He does not give his mind to that, you know. I am very sorry, but neither he nor I have had anybody to put it in our heads what we ought to do—but still he does some good in his way. If you were as rich as he is, how much you could do! You would

be a good angel to the poor people. You could set right half of those dreadful things that Mrs Mitford tells us of, even in the village. You could give the lads work, and keep them steady. You could build them proper cottages, and have them taught what they ought to know. Don't shake your head. I know you would be the people's good angel, if you were as rich as papa."

Poor John's countenance had changed many times during this address. His intent gaze fell from her, and returned and fell again. A shade came over his face—he shook his head, not in contradiction of what she said so much as in despondency; and when he spoke, his voice had taken a chill, as it were, and lost all the musical thrill of imagination and passion that was in it. "Miss Crediton," he said, mournfully, "you remind me of what I had forgotten—the great gulf that is between you and me. I had forgotten it, like an ass. I had been thinking of you not as a rich man's daughter, but as— And I, a poor aimless fool, not able to make up my mind as to how I am to provide for my own life. Forgive me—you have brought me to myself."

"Now I should like to know what that has to do with it," cried Kate, with a little air of exasperation—exasperation more apparent than real. "I tell you I want you to be rich like papa, and you answer me that I remind you I am a rich man's daughter! Well, what of that? I want you to be a rich man too. I can't help whose daughter I am. I did not choose my own papa—though I like him better than any other all the same. But I want you to be rich *too*, you understand; for many reasons."

"For what reasons?" said John, lighting up again. She had drooped her head a little when she said these last words. A bright blush had flushed all over her. Could it be that she meant— John was

not vain, and yet the inference was so natural; he sat gazing at her for one long minute in a suggestive tremulous silence, and then he went faltering, blundering on. "I would be anything for your sake—that you know. I would be content to labour for you from morning to night. I would be a ploughman for your sake. To be a rich man is not so easy; but if you were to tell me to do it—for you—I would work my fingers to the bone; I would die, but I should do it—for you. Am I to be rich for you?"

"Oh, fancy! here we are already," cried Kate, in a little tremor, feeling that she had gone too far, and he had gone too far, and thinking with a little panic, half of horror, half of pleasure, of the walk that remained to be taken through the enchanted wood. "How fast the stream has carried us down! and yet I don't suppose it can have been very fast either, for the shadows are lengthening. We must make haste and get home."

"But you have not answered me," he said, still leaning across his oars with a look which she could not face.

"Oh, never mind just now," she cried; "let us land, please, and not drift farther down. You are paying no attention to where the boat is going. There! I knew an accident would happen," cried Kate, with half-mischievous triumph, running the boat into the bank. She thought nothing now of his feet getting wet, as he stepped into the water again to bring it to the side that she might land. She even sprang out and ran on, telling him to follow her, while he had to wait to secure the boat, and warn the people at the forester's cottage that he had left it. Kate ran on into the wood, up the broad road gradually narrowing among the trees, where still the sunshine penetrated like arrows of gold, and the leaves danced double, leaf and shadow, and the birds carried on their cease-

less interluding, and the living creatures stirred. She ran on mischievously, with a little laugh at her companion left behind. But that mood did not long balance the influence of the place. Her steps slackened—her heart began to beat. All at once she twined her arms about a birch to support herself, and, leaning her head against it, cried a little in her confusion and excitement. "Oh, what have I done! what shall I say to him?" Kate said to herself. Was she in love with John that she had brought him to this declaration of his sentiments? She did not know—she did not think she was—and yet she had done it with her eyes open. And in a few minutes he would be by her side insisting on an answer. "And what shall I say to him?" within herself cried Kate.

But when John came up breathless, she was going along the road very demurely, without any signs of emotion, and glanced at him with the same look of friendly sovereignty, though her heart was quailing within her. He joined her, breathless with haste and excitement, and for a moment neither spoke. Then it was Kate who, in desperation, resumed the talk.

"You must tell me what you think another time," she said, with an air of royal calm. "Perhaps what I have said has not been very wise; but I meant it for good. I meant, you know, that the man of action can do most. I meant—But, please, let us get on quickly, for I am so afraid we shall be too late for dinner. Your father does not like to wait. And you can tell me what you think another time."

"What I think has very little to do with it," said John. "It should be what you think—what you ordain. For you I will do anything—everything. Good heavens, what a nuisance!" cried the young man.

At this exclamation Kate looked up, and saw,—was it Isaac's substitute—the ram caught in the thicket!—Fred Huntley riding

quietly towards them, coming down under the trees, like another somebody in romance. "It is Mr Huntley," said Kate, with a mental thanksgiving which she dared not have put into words. "It is like an old ballad. Here is the knight on the white horse appearing under the trees just when he is wanted—that is, just when you were beginning to tire of my society; and here am I, the errant damosel. What a nice picture it would make if Fred were only handsome, which he is not! But all the same, his horse is white."

"And I suppose I am the magician who is to be discomfited and put to flight," said John, with a grim attempt at a smile.

And here Kate's best qualities made her cruel. "You are—whatever you please," she said, turning upon him with the brightest sudden smile. She could not bear, poor fellow, that his feelings should be hurt, when she felt herself so relieved and easy in mind; and John, out of his despondency, went up to dazzling heights of confidence and hope. Fred, riding up, saw the smile, and said to himself, "What! gone so far already?" with a curious sensation of pique. And yet he had no occasion to be piqued. He had never set up any pretensions to Kate's favour. He had foreseen how it would be when he last saw them together. It was something too ridiculous to feel as if he cared. Of course he did not care. But still there was a little pique in his rapid reflection as he came up to them. And they were all three a little embarrassed, which, on the whole, seemed uncalled for, considering the perfectly innocent and ordinary circumstances, which the boating-party immediately began with volubility to explain.

"We have been on the river," said Kate. "Mr Mitford so kindly offered to take me before I went away. And we hoped to have Mrs Mitford with us; but at the last moment she could not come."

I daresay not, indeed, Fred Huntley said in his heart; but he only looked politely indifferent, and made a little bow.

"Perhaps it was better she did not, for the boat is very small," said John, carrying on the explanation. Was it an apology they were making for themselves? And so all at once, notwithstanding Kate's romance about the knight on the white horse, all the enchantment disappeared from the fairy wood. Birds and rabbits and squirrels, creatures of natural history, pursued their common occupations about, without any fairy suggestions. It was only the afternoon sun that slanted among the trees, showing it was growing late, and not showers of golden arrows. The wood became as commonplace as a railroad, and Kate Crediton related to Fred Huntley how she was going home, and what was to happen, and how she hoped to meet his sisters at the Camelford ball.

Thus the crisis which John thought was to decide everything for him passed off in bathos and commonplace. He walked on beside the other two, who did all the talking, eating his heart. Had she been playing with him, making a joke of his sudden passion? But then she would give him a glance from time to time which spoke otherwise. "There is still an evening and a morning," John said to himself; and he stood like a churl at the Rectory gate, and suffered Huntley to ride on without the slightest hint of a possibility that he should stay to dinner. Such inhospitable behaviour was not common at Fanshawe Regis. But there are moments in which politeness, kindness, neighbourly charities, must all give way before a more potent feeling, and John Mitford had arrived at one of these. And his heart was beating, his head throbbing, all his pulses going at the highest speed and out of tune—or, at least, that was his sensation. Kate disappeared while he stood at the gate,

shutting it carefully upon Fred, and heaven knows what frightful interval might be before him ere he could resume the interrupted conversation, and demand the answer to which surely he had a right! John's mind was in such a whirl of confusion that he could not realise what he was about to do. If he could have thought it over calmly, and asked himself what right he had to woo a rich man's daughter, or even to dream of bringing her to his level, probably poor John would not only have stopped short, but he might have had resolution enough to turn back and leave his father's door, and put himself out of the reach of temptation till she was safe in her own father's keeping. He had strength enough and resolution enough to have made such a sacrifice, had there been any time to think; but sudden passion had swept him up like a whirlwind, and conquered all his faculties. He wanted to have an answer; an answer—nothing more. He wanted to know what she meant—why it was that she was so eager with him to bring his doubtfulness to a conclusion—why he was to do at once what he so hesitated and wondered if he should do. If he did, what would follow? There was a singing in his ears, and a buzzing in his brain. He could not think, nor pause to consider which was right. There was but one thing to do—to get his answer from her; to know what she meant. And then the Deluge or Paradise—one thing or the other—would come after that; but were it Paradise, or were it the Flood, John's anchors were pulled up, and the port was gone from him. All his old prospects and hopes and intentions had vanished. He could no more go back to the position in which he had stood when he first opened his heart to Kate than he could fly. His hesitation existed no longer; all that phase was over for him. Fanshawe Regis, and his parents' hopes, and the old placid existence

to which he had been trained, all melted away into thin air. He was standing on the threshold of a new world, with an unknown wind blowing in his face, and an unknown career before him. If it might be that she was about to put her little hand in his, and go with him across the wilderness! But, anyhow, it was a wilderness that had to be traversed; not those quiet waters and green pastures which had been destined for him at home.

"How late you are, John!" his mother said, meeting him on the stair. She was coming down dressed for dinner, with just a little cloud over the brightness of her eyes. "You must have stayed a long time on the river. Was that Kate that has just gone up-stairs?"

"Miss Crediton went on before me. I had to stop and speak to Huntley at the gate."

"You should have asked him to stay dinner," said Mrs Mitford. "My dear, I am sure you have a headache. You should not have rowed so far, under that blazing sun. But make haste now. Your papa cannot bear to be kept waiting. I will tell Jervis to give you five minutes. And, oh, make haste, my dear boy."

"Of course I shall make haste," said John, striding past—as if ten minutes more or less could matter to anybody under the sun!

"It is for your papa, John," said Mrs Mitford, half apologetic, half reproachful; and she went down to

the drawing-room and surreptitiously moved the fingers of the clock to gain a little time for her boy. "Jervis, you need not be in such a hurry—there are still ten minutes," she said, arresting the man of all work who was called the butler at Fanshawe, as he put his hand on the dinner-bell to ring it; and she was having a little discussion with him over their respective watches, when the Doctor approached in his fresh tie. "The drawing-room clock is never wrong," said the deceitful woman. And no doubt that was why the trout was spoiled and the soup so cold. For Kate did not hurry with her toilette, whatever John might do; and being a little agitated and excited, her hair took one of those perverse fits peculiar to ladies' hair, and would not permit itself to be put up properly. Kate, too, was in a wonderful commotion of mind, as well as her lover. She was tingling all over with her adventure, and the hairbreadth escape she had made. But had she escaped? There was a long evening still before her, and it was premature to believe that the danger was over. When Kate went down-stairs, she had more than one reason for being so very uncomfortable. Dr Mitford was waiting for his dinner, and John was waiting for his answer; she could not tell what might happen to her before the evening was over, and she could scarcely speak with composure because of the frightened irregular beating of her heart.

CHAPTER X.

Dinner falling in a time of excitement like that which I have just described, with its suggestions of perfect calm and regularity, the unbroken routine of life, has a very curious effect upon agitated minds. John Mitford felt as if some catastrophe must have happened to him as he sat alone at his side of the table, and looked across at Kate,

who was a little troubled too, and reflected how long a time he must sit there eating and drinking, or pretending to eat and drink; obliged to keep at that distance from her—to address common conversation to her—to describe the boating, and the wood, and all that had happened, as if it had been the most ordinary expedition in the

world. Kate was very kind to him in this respect, though perhaps he was too far gone to think it kind. She took upon herself the *frais* of the conversation. She told Mrs Mitford quite fluently all about the boat and her bad steering, and all the accidents that had happened, and how John had jumped into the water. "I feel you will never forgive me if he has caught cold," Kate said, glibly, with even a mischievous look in her eye; "but I must tell. And I do hope you changed your stockings," she said, leaning across the table to him with a smile. It was a mocking smile, full of mischief, and yet there was in it a certain softened look. It was then that poor John felt as if some explosion must take place, as he sat and restrained himself, and tried to look like a man interested in his dinner. Nobody else took any notice of his agitation, and probably even his mother did not perceive it; but Jervis the butler did, as he stood by his side, and helped Mr John to potatoes. He could not dissimulate the shaking of his hand.

"My dear, I should never blame you," said Mrs Mitford, with a little tremor in her voice; "he is always so very rash. Of course you changed, John?"

"Oh, of course," he said, with a laugh, which sounded cynical and Byronic to his audience. And then he made a violent effort to master himself. "Miss Crediton thought the river was rather pretty," he added, with a hard-drawn breath of agitation, which sounded to his mother like the first appearance of the threatened cold.

"Jervis," she said, mildly, "will you be good enough to fetch me the camphor from my cupboard, and two lumps of sugar? My dear boy, it is not nasty; it is only as a precaution. It will not interfere with your dinner, and it is sure to stop a cold."

John gave his mother a look

under which she trembled. It said as plain as possible, you are making me ridiculous, and it was pointed by a glance at Kate, who certainly was smiling. Mrs Mitford was quick enough to understand, and she was cowed by her son's gravity. "Perhaps, on second thought," she said, faltering, "you need not mind, Jervis. It will do when Mr John goes to bed."

"The only use of camphor is at the moment when you take a cold," said Dr Mitford; "identify that moment, and take your dose, and you are all safe. But I have always found that the great difficulty was to identify the moment. Did you point out to Miss Crediton the curious effect the current has had upon the rocks? I am not geological myself, but still it is very interesting. The constant friction of the water has laid bare a most remarkable stratification. Ah! I see he did not point it out, from your look."

"Indeed I don't think Mr John showed me anything that was instructive," said Kate, with a demure glance at him. At present she was having it all her own way.

"Ah! youth, youth," said Dr Mitford, shaking his head. "He was much more likely to tell you about his boating exploits, I fear. If you really wish to understand the history and structure of the district, you must take me with you, Miss Crediton. Young men are so foolish as to think these things slow."

"But then I am going away to-morrow," said Kate, with a little pathetic inflection of her voice. "And perhaps Mrs Mitford will never ask me to come back again. And I shall have to give up the hope of knowing the district. But anybody that steers so badly as I do,"—Kate continued, with humility, "it is not to be wondered at if the gentleman who is rowing them should think they were too ignorant to learn."

"Then the gentleman who was rowing you was a stupid fellow," said the Doctor. "I never had a more intelligent listener in my life; but, my dear young lady, you must come back when the Society is here. Their meeting is at Camel-ford, and they must make an excursion to the Camp."

"And you will come and stay with us, Dr Mitford," said Kate, coaxingly; "now, promise. It will be something to look forward to. You shall have the room next the library, that papa always keeps for his learned friends, he says. And if Mrs Mitford would be good, and let the parish take care of itself, and come too——"

"Oh hush! my dear; we must not look forward so far," said Mrs Mitford, with a little cloud upon her face. She had found out by this time that John was in trouble, and she had no heart to enter into any discussion till she knew what it was. And then she opened out suddenly into a long account of the Fanshawe family, *apropos de rien*. Mrs Fanshawe had been calling that afternoon, and they had heard from their granddaughter, Cicely, who was abroad for her health—for all that family was unfortunately very delicate. And poor Cicely would have to spend the winter at Nice, the doctor said. Kate bent her head over her plate, and ate her grapes (the very first of the season, which Mr Crediton's gardener had forced for his young mistress, and sent to Fanshawe Regis to aid her cure), and listened without paying much attention to the story of Cicely Fanshawe's troubles. Nobody else took any further part in the conversation after Mrs Mitford had commenced that monologue, except indeed the Doctor, who now and then would ask a question. As for the two young people, they sat on either side of the table, and tried to look as if nothing had happened. And Kate, for one, succeeded very well in this

laudable effort—so well that poor John, in his excitement and agitation, sank to the depths of despair as he twisted one of the great vine-leaves in his fingers, and watched her furtively through all the windings of his mother's story. He said to himself, it is nothing to her. Her mind is quite unmoved by anything that has happened. She could not have understood him, John felt—she could not have believed him. She must have thought he was saying words which he did not mean. Perhaps that was the way among the frivolous beings to whom she was accustomed; but it was not the way with John. While the mother was giving that account of the young Fanshawes, and the father interposing his questions about Cicely's health, their son was working himself up into a fever of determination. He eyed Kate at the other side of the table, with a certain rage of resolution mingling with his love. She should not escape him like this. She should answer him one way or another. He could bear anything or everything from her except this silence; but that he would not bear. She should tell him face to face. He might have lost the very essence and joy of life, but still he should know downright that he had lost it. This passion was growing in him while the quiet slumberous time crept on, and all was told about Cicely Fanshawe. Poor Cicely! just Kate's age, and sent to Nice to die; but that thought never occurred to the vehement young lover, nor did it occur to Kate, as she sat and ate her grapes, and gave little glances across the table, and divined that he was rising to a white heat. "I must run off to my own room, and say it is to do my packing," Kate said to herself, with a little quake in her heart; and yet she would rather have liked—behind a curtain or door, out of harm's way—to have heard him say what he had to say.

Mrs Mitford was later than usual of leaving the table, and she took Kate by the arm, being determined apparently to *contrarier* everybody on this special evening, and made her sit down on the sofa by her in the drawing-room. "My dear, I must have you to myself for a little while to-night," she said, drawing the girl's hands into her own. And then she sat and talked. It seemed to Kate that she talked of everything in heaven and earth; but the old singing had come back to the listener's ears, and she could not pay attention. "Now he is coming," she said to herself; "now I shall be obliged to sit still all the evening; now I shall never be able to escape from him." By-and-by, however, Kate began to feel piqued that John should show so little eagerness to follow her. "Yes, indeed, dear Mrs Mitford, you may be sure I shall always remember your kindness," she said, aloud. But in her heart she was saying in the same breath, "Oh, very well; if he does not care I am sure I do not care. I am only too glad to be let off so easy;" which was true, and yet quite the reverse of true.

But then Kate did not see the watcher outside the window in the darkness, who saw all that was going on, and bided his time, though he trembled with impatience and excitement. Not knowing he was there, she came to have a very disdainful feeling about him as the moments passed on. To ask such a question as that, and never to insist on an answer! Well, he might be very nice; but what should she do with a man that took so little pains to secure his object. Or was it his object at all? He might be cleverer than she had taken him for; he might be but playing with her, as she had intended to play with him. Indignant with these thoughts, she rose up when Mrs Mitford's last words came to a conclusion, and detached herself, not without a slight coldness, from that

kind embrace. "I must go and see to my things, please," she said, raising her head like a young queen. "But, my dear, there is Parsons," said Mrs Mitford. "Oh, but I must see after everything myself," replied Kate, and went away, not in haste, as making her escape, but with a certain stateliness of despatch. She walked out of the room quite leisurely, feeling it beneath her dignity to fly from an adversary that showed no signs of pursuing; and even turned round at the door to say something with a boldness which looked almost like bravado. He will come now, no doubt, and find me gone, and I hope he will enjoy the *tête-à-tête* with his mother, she mused, with a certain ferocity; and so went carelessly out, with all the haughtiness of pique, and walked almost into John Mitford's arms!

He seized her hand before she knew what had happened, and drew it through his arm, first throwing a shawl round her, which he had picked up somewhere, and which, suddenly curling round her like a lasso, was Kate's first indication of what had befallen her. "I have been watching you till I am half wild," he whispered in her ear. "Oh come with me to the garden, and say three words to me. I have no other chance for to-night."

"Oh, please, let me go. I must see to my packing—indeed I must," cried Kate, so startled and moved by the suddenness of the attack, and by his evident excitement, that she could scarcely keep from tears.

"Not now," said John, in her ear—"not now. I must have my answer. You cannot be so cruel as to go now. Only half an hour—only ten minutes—Kate!"

"Hush! oh hush!" she cried, feeling herself conquered; and ere she knew, the night air was blowing in her face, and the dark sky, with its faint little summer stars, was shining over her, and John Mitford, holding her close, with her hand on

his arm, was bending over her, a dark shadow. She could not read in his face all the passion that possessed him, but she felt it, and it made her tremble, woman of the world as she was.

"Kate," he said, "I cannot go searching for words now. I think I will go mad if you don't speak to me. Tell me what I am to hope for. Give me my answer. I cannot bear any more."

His voice was hoarse; he held her hand fast on his arm, not caressing, but compelling. He was driven out of all patience; and for the first time in her life Kate's spirit was cowed, and her wit failed to the command of the situation.

"Let me go!" she said; "oh, do let me go! you frighten me, Mr John."

"Don't call me Mr John. I am your slave, if you like; I will be anything you please. You said just now we belonged to each other; so we do. No, I can't be generous; it is not the moment to be generous. I have a claim upon you—don't call me Mr John."

"Then what shall I call you?" Kate said, with a little hysterical giggle. And all at once, at that most inappropriate moment, there flashed across her mind the first name she had recognised his identity by. *My John*—was that the alternative? Sheshrank a little and trembled, and did not know whether she should laugh or cry. Should she call him that just as an experiment, to see how he would take it?—or what else could she do to escape from him out of this dark place, all full of dew, and odours, and silence, into the light and the safety of her own room? And yet all this time she made no attempt to withdraw her hand from his arm. She wanted something to lean on at such a crisis, and he was very handy for leaning on—tall, and strong, and sturdy, and affording a very adequate support. "Oh, do let me go!" she burst out all at

once. "It was only for your own good I spoke to you; I did not mean—this. Why should you do things for me? I don't want—to make any change. I should like to have you always just as we have been—friends. Don't say any more just yet—listen. I like you very much for a friend. You said yourself we were like brother and sister. Oh, why should you vex me and bother me, and want to be anything different?" said Kate, in her confusion, suddenly beginning to cry without any warning. But next moment, without knowing how it was, she became aware that she was crying very comfortably on John's shoulder. Her crying was more than he could bear. He took her into his arms to console her without any *arrière pensée*. "Oh, my darling, I am not worth it," he said, stooping over her. "Is it for me—that would never let the wind blow on you? Kate! I will not trouble you any more." And with that, before he was aware, in his compunction and sympathy, his lips somehow found themselves close to her cheek. It was all to keep her from crying—to show how sorry he was for having grieved her. His heart yearned over the soft tender creature. What did it matter what he suffered, who was only a man? But that Kate should cry!—and that it should be his fault! He felt in his simplicity that he was giving her up for ever, and his big heart almost broke, as he bent down trembling, and encountered that soft warm velvet cheek.

How it happened I cannot tell. He did not mean it, and she did not mean it. But certainly Kate committed herself hopelessly by crying there quite comfortably on his shoulder, and suffering herself to be kissed without so much as a protest. He was so frightened by his own temerity, and so surprised at it, that even had she vindicated her dignity after the first moment, and burst indignant from his arms,

John would have begged her pardon with abject misery, and there would have been an end of him, But somehow Kate was bewildered, and let that moment pass; and after the surprise and shock which his own unprecedented audacity wrought in him, John grew bolder, as was natural. She was not angry; she endured it without protest. Was it possible that in her trouble she was unconscious of it? And involuntarily John came to see that boldness was now his only policy, and that it must not be possible for her to ignore the facts of the case. That was all simple enough. But as for Kate, I am utterly unable to explain her conduct. Even when she came to herself, all she did was to put up her hands to her face, and to murmur piteously, humbly, "Don't! oh, please, don't!" And why shouldn't he, when that was all the resistance she made?

After this, the young man being partly delirious, as might have been expected, it was Kate who had to come to the front of affairs and take the lead. "Do, please, be rational now," she said, shaking herself free all in a moment. "And give me your arm, you foolish John, and let us take a turn round the garden. Oh, what would your mother say if she knew how ridiculous you have been making yourself? Tell me quietly what it is you want now," she added, in her most coaxing tone, looking up into his face.

Upon which the bewildered fellow poured forth a flood of ascriptions of praise and pæans of victory, and compared Kate, who knew she was no angel, to all the deities and excellences ever known to man. She listened to it all patiently, and then shook her head with gentle half-maternal tolerance.

"Well," she said, "let us take all that for granted, you know. Of course I am everything that is nice. If you did not think so you would be a savage; but, John, please

don't be foolish. Tell me properly. I have gone and given in to you when I did not mean to. And now, what do you want?"

"I want you," he said; "have you any doubt about that? And, except for your sake, I don't care for anything else in the world."

"Oh, but I care for a great many things," said Kate. "And, John," she went on, joining both her hands on his arm, and leaning her head lightly against it in her caressing way, "first of all, you have accepted my conditions, you know, and taken my advice?"

"Yes, my darling," said John; and then somehow his eye was caught by the lights in the windows so close at hand, the one in the library, the other in the drawing-room, where sat his parents, who had the fullest confidence in him; and he gave a slight start and sigh, in spite of himself.

"Perhaps you repent your bargain already," said impetuous Kate, being instantly conscious of both start and sigh, and of the feeling which had produced them.

"Ah! how can you speak to me so," he said, "when you know if it was life I had to pay for it I would do it joyfully? No; even if I had never seen you I could not have done what they wanted me. That is the truth. And now I have you, my sweetest——"

"Hush," she said, softly, "we have not come to that yet. There is a great deal, such a great deal, to think about; and there is papa——"

"And I have so little to offer," said John; "it is only now I feel how little. Ah! how five minutes change everything! It never came into my mind that I had nothing to offer you—I was so full of yourself. But now!—you who should have kingdoms laid at your feet—what right had a penniless fellow like me——"

"If you regret you can always go back," said Kate, promptly;

"though, you know, it is a kind of insinuation against me, as if I had consented far too easy. And, to tell the truth, I never did consent."

Here poor John clutched at her hand, which seemed to be sliding from his arm, and held it fast without a word.

"No, I never did consent," said Kate. "It was exactly like the savages that knock a poor girl down and then carry her off. You never asked me even—you took me. Well, but then the thing to be drawn from that, is not any nonsense about giving up. If you will promise to be good, and do everything I tell you, and let me manage with papa——"

"But it is my business to let him know," said John. "No, my darling—not even for you. I could not skulk, nor do anything underhand. I must tell *him*, and I must tell them——"

"Then you will have your way, and we shall come to grief," said Kate; "as if I did not know papa best. And then—I am not half nor quarter so good as you; but in some things I am cleverer than you, John."

"In everything, dear," he said, with one of those ecstatic smiles peculiar to his state of folly, though in the darkness Kate did not get the benefit of it. "I never have, never will compare myself to my darling. It is all your goodness letting me—all your sweetness and humility and——"

"Please don't," said Kate, "please stop—please don't talk such nonsense. Oh, I hope I shall never behave so badly that you will be forced to find me out. But now about papa. It must be me to tell him; you may come in afterwards, if you like. I know what I shall do. I will drive the phaeton to the station to meet him. I *will* be the one to tell him first. John, I know what I am talking of, and I must have my own way."

"Are you out there, John, in the dark? and who have you got with you?" said Mrs Mitford's voice suddenly in their ears. It made them jump apart as if it had been the voice of a ghost. And Kate, panting, blazing with blushes in the darkness, feeling as if she never could face those soft eyes again, recoiled back into the lilies, and felt the great white paradise of dew and sweetness take her in, and busk her round with a garland of odour. Oh, what was she to do? Could *he* do anything? would he be equal to the emergency? Thus it will be seen that, though she was very fond of him, she had not yet the most perfect confidence in the reliability of her John.

"Yes, mother, I am here," said John, with a mellow fulness in his voice which Kate could not understand, so different was it from his usual tone, "and I have Kate with me—my Kate—your Kate; or, at least, there she is among the lilies. She ought to be in your arms first, after mine."

"After yours!" His mother gave a little scream. And Kate held up her head among the flowers, blushing, yet satisfied. It was shocking of him to tell; but yet it settled the question. She stood irresolute for a moment, breathing quick with excitement, and then she made a little run into Mrs Mitford's arms. "He has made me be engaged to him whether I will or not," she said, half crying on her friend's shoulder. "He has made me. Won't you love me too?"

"O Kate!" was all the mother could say. "O my boy! what have you done?—what have you done? John, her father is ten times as rich as we are. He will say we have abused his trust. Oh! what shall I do?"

"Abused his trust indeed!" said Kate. "John, you are not to say a word; she does not understand. Why, it was I who did it all! I gave him no peace. I kept talk-

ing to him of things I had no business with ; and he is only a man—indeed he is only a boy. Mamma, won't you kiss me, please?" said Kate, all at once sinking into the meekest of tones ; upon which Mrs Mitford, quite overcome, and wanting to kiss her son first, and with a hundred questions in her mind to pour out upon him, yet submitted, and put her arm round the stranger who was clinging to her and kissed Kate—but not with her heart. She had kissed her a great deal more tenderly only yesterday, just to say good-night ; and then the three stood silent in the darkness, and the scene took another shape, and John's beatitude was past. The moment the mother joined them another world came in. The enchanted world, which held only two figures, opened up and disappeared like a scene at a theatre ; and lo ! there appeared all round a mass of other people to whom John's passion was a matter of indifference or a thing to be disapproved. Suddenly the young pair felt themselves standing not

only before John's anxious mother, but before Mr Crediton, gloomy and wretched ; before Dr Mitford, angry and mortified ; before the whole neighbourhood, who would judge them without much consideration of mercy. John's reflections at this moment were harder to support than those of Kate, for he had the sense of giving up for her sake the vocation he had been trained to, and the awful necessity of declaring his resolution to his father and mother before him. Whereas the worst that could be said of Kate was that she was a little flirt, and had turned John Mitford's head—and she had heard as much before. But, notwithstanding, they were both strangely sobered all in a moment as they stood there, fallen out of their fairy sphere, by Mrs Mitford's side.

"My dears, I must hear all about this after," she said, with a kind of tremulous solemnity, "but in the mean time you must come in to tea. Whatever we do, we must not be late for prayers."

LORD MAYO AND THE UMBALLA DURBAR.

WE think it will be admitted that the time has now arrived when a pointed conclusion may be drawn as to the purport and object of the frontier policy adopted in March 1869 by Lord Mayo at Umballa. A brief examination of the subject will show what has been the result of that policy on the external relations of Great Britain with her Asiatic neighbours; what on the internal condition of the most powerful of those neighbours. In both aspects the subject is deeply interesting. In the first, because in the solution arrived at by Lord Mayo we may trace the germs of the true principles of Anglo-Indian foreign policy; in the second, because the spectacle of a semi-barbarous prince endeavouring to engraft on a feudal nobility and a rude people some of the administrative principles which he learned to admire during his short progress through a portion of British India, cannot fail to arrest the attention and rivet the sympathy of the thoughtful minds of all civilised communities. It is a picture unique of its kind—an experiment the importance of which to the people of Central Asia can scarcely be exaggerated.

The question of an interview with the ruler of Afghanistan, Amir Shir Ali, had been mooted, towards the close of 1868, by the illustrious predecessor of Lord Mayo. For five years, almost from the death of Dost Mahomed in June 1863, Afghanistan had been a prey to civil war. From all interference in the events of the civil war Sir John Lawrence had rigidly abstained. He had withheld even all expressions of sympathy with either party, being desirous that the question of rulership should be decided by the Afghans themselves. But when, after many changes of fortune, the legitimate successor of

Dost Mahomed, Amir Shir Ali, on the 11th September 1868, entered Caubul in triumph—one of his rivals having died, the other being a helpless fugitive, without money and without resources—Sir John Lawrence deemed that the happy moment to which he had so long looked forward had at length arrived, and that he might venture to renew with Shir Ali the cordial alliance which British India had, during the later years of his life, maintained with his father. He accordingly listened eagerly to the friendly overtures which Shir Ali lost no time in making to the British representative at Caubul, Atta Mahomed Khan; and he even expressed his entire readiness to meet Shir Ali at Peshawur, to arrange with him, at a personal interview, the relations which should in future subsist between the ruler of Afghanistan and the Viceroy of the Queen.

Apparently Sir John Lawrence was not impelled to this course by any dread of the proceedings of Russia in the neighbourhood of Samarkhand and Bokhara. He had always expressed an opinion that if Russia should advance towards the possessions of the English in India—a contingency which he doubted—the English would only weaken themselves if they moved beyond their present frontier. On that frontier should they, in his opinion, await the foe. Nor had he a very exalted opinion of the power of Afghanistan to offer any effectual resistance to a Russian army. He was equally sceptical of our power to bind Afghanistan irrevocably to our interests. Our best policy, in his opinion, consisted in maintaining towards her a friendly attitude, in endeavouring to win her confidence by showing her how entirely her interests necessitated an alliance with

ourselves, and especially by demonstrating that under no pretext and under no temptation would British India advance one single yard beyond her own frontier in the direction of Afghanistan with the idea of making any territorial acquisition.

It was with a view to the latter object that Sir John Lawrence had always abstained from interference with Afghan politics during the civil war. He had thus, he conceived, proved to the Afghan people that our friendship was not affected by their misfortunes, and that we were the disinterested allies of their nation. But now that the war had ended in the predominance of Shir Ali, he was of opinion that we might fairly advance from our seclusion, and, though still abstaining from any offensive alliance with that prince, give a somewhat more positive character to our friendship. With this in view he consented to meet Shir Ali at Peshawur.

The interview, however, did not take place. Before the letter of Sir John Lawrence reached the Amir, that prince had received intelligence that a considerable Turcoman army, under the command of his nephew, Abdul Ruhman, was marching upon Caubul. This army constituted the last hope of his rivals. Were this to be beaten or dispersed, there would remain no one to dispute his authority. It was strong in numbers and in organisation, and was commanded by a man who possessed the highest character as a leader. To neglect to oppose that army—to leave anything undone to vanquish it—in order to meet the Viceroy on British ground, would, the Amir thought, be tantamount to political suicide. He wrote, therefore, to state that, before he could fix a time and place for an interview, it was first indispensable that he should put down his enemies. He did not doubt his success, but he felt that to attain it he must put

into action all the resources at his disposal.

He did succeed. In the month of December 1868 the army of Abdul Ruhman was completely routed, and Shir Ali became the unchallenged ruler of Afghanistan. But before intelligence of this event reached Calcutta, Sir John Lawrence had made over his high office to the Earl of Mayo.

This event occurred on the 12th January 1869. Probably, of all the appointments in the gift of the Crown, and to which a British statesman desirous of serving his country is liable to be called, there is not one more onerous, not one requiring a greater grasp of mind, not one that calls more immediately into action the higher faculties of a man, than the Governor-Generalship of India. The statesman who may be nominated First Minister of the Crown has invariably served a long apprenticeship to that high office. He comes to it almost always from the leadership of the Opposition, familiar, therefore, with all the moves of the political chess-board, fresh from the battle-field on which he is called to assume command. But, in India, the incoming Viceroy is brought suddenly upon a scene in which all is new to him. The various races of the Indian peninsula, their differing customs and religions, their mutual enmities, their relations to the conquering nation, present social problems hardly to be understood except upon the spot. There are men in Europe who talk glibly of the people of Hindostan, and who are yet little aware that between the hardy and martial Sikh of the frontier and the weak and effeminate native of Bengal proper, there is a difference far wider than between any races of Europe—a difference approaching more nearly that between the Bengalee and the European. These differences apply, in a greater or less degree, to all the races of Hindostan. The thorough appreciation of the relations of the

paramount power with those *quasi-independent* princes who occupy the position of feudatories, as well as with the really independent princes who lie on our frontier, is a still more difficult and not less important task. When, moreover, it is recollected that the new Viceroy is brought suddenly in contact with an administration with the *personnel* of which he is utterly unacquainted—that he has, unassisted, to read their characters, to find out their capacities, and, without being himself under the influence of any, to adapt from each the peculiar knowledge he may possess,—it will, we think, be admitted that the position is one which might test the capacity of the ablest, to which only a man strong in his own strength could be equal.

There are, nevertheless, very great advantages resulting from the appointment of an English nobleman, untried in Indian affairs as he may be, to the office of Viceroy. He arrives in the country unfettered and unprejudiced; he is ignorant, and happily ignorant, of the jealousies, the intrigues, the service influences, of Anglo-Indian society; he belongs to no particular school of Indian politics; he brings to bear upon the administration of affairs the fresh mind of an English statesman. In any differences of opinion among his colleagues he is able to assume the position, not of partisan, but of arbiter. Experience has shown that this alone is a great advantage. We may safely conclude, then, that though the difficulties to be encountered by an English statesman coming to India may be greater than those attaching to any other office in the gift of the Crown, they are not altogether insurmountable, provided only the Viceroy be endowed with capacity and tact; and that, those difficulties once surmounted, he occupies a position to which no man trained only in India, however brilliant his abilities, could hope to attain.

One of the first subjects to which

the attention of Lord Mayo was drawn after his arrival at Calcutta was the state of our relations with Afghanistan. Within a week or two of that event he received official intimation of the removal of the obstacle which had prevented the meeting of the Amir with his predecessor. He learned, in fact, the defeat of the Turcoman army, and the complete triumph of Shir Ali. A few days later, intelligence was forwarded to him by the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab that the Amir, now stronger than he had ever been, was more than ever anxious to renew with the Government of India those friendly personal relations which, since the death of his father, had remained interrupted; and that he had expressed a strong desire to meet the new Viceroy in British territory.

There were, at this time, two courses open to Lord Mayo. Should he continue the policy of complete abstention which had characterised all but the last three months of the preceding five years, the policy of holding aloof even from courteous intercourse with the rightful sovereign, lest such intercourse should be interpreted to signify a recognition of his claims and an intention to support them? or should he recur to that other policy to which his predecessor had reverted during the last three months of his rule, the frank and generous policy which had guided our relations with the Amir Dost Mahomed during the last nine years of his life—the policy of giving to the ruler of the country a friendly support, not only by recognising his rights, but by the occasional grant of such timely aid in the hour of his necessities as might enable him to beat down rebellion within, and to resist hostilities from without? There would be no occasion to specify the nature of the aid to be thus afforded. Its grant might be regulated rather by mutual understanding than by treaty; whilst the nature of it—whether it were

to consist of presents of muskets or gifts of money, might depend upon the actual wants of the Amir. The aim to be arrived at may be described as the policy of making the Amir strong relatively to his immediate neighbours, and of showing him that he owed the strength so acquired to the disinterested friendship of the power on his eastern frontier.

It was a fortunate circumstance that Lord Mayo had come out committed to no policy. Not only was he unfettered by the action of his predecessor, but the turn of events by which the fortunes of Shir Ali triumphed about the time that he assumed the reins of government, would, under any circumstances, have given free scope to his action. Viewing the question, therefore, with an unprejudiced mind, he could not but see how important it was for British India that the most powerful neighbour on her frontier should look to her for friendship and support. More especially did this seem to him to be advisable at a period when the outposts of the Russian army had reached the banks of the Oxus, and when that power seemed about to take up, on the northern borders of the territories of the Amir, a position nearly analogous to that held by us on the eastern. It cannot be doubted that he felt, with all this, as much averse as his predecessor to any movement which should assume the form of actual interference, either by force of arms or by diplomacy. He wished neither to extend our frontier by the occupation of Khoorm, nor to send English officers to drill the troops of the Amir, nor to despatch a British envoy to Caubul. In all these respects he held entirely to his predecessor's views. But he was decidedly of opinion that true policy counselled him to respond to the friendly overtures of the Amir, to abandon the system of indifference, to show him that we were prepared to grant him such

friendly aid, as short of armed interference, a neighbour in distress might demand of a neighbour in affluence—to recur, in short, to the policy of Lords Dalhousie and Canning towards his father.

But, whilst arriving at this sound conclusion, it is evident that Lord Mayo was determined to abstain from the display, on the part of his Government, of too great eagerness in responding to the overtures of Shir Ali. He was of opinion, moreover, that the meeting, should it take place, ought to be held at a point well within our own frontier. He thought, and in this he showed a rare sagacity, which has been pre-eminently fruitful of results, that the opportunity should not be neglected of displaying to the Amir some of the wonders of Western civilisation; of showing him our admirably-equipped mountain batteries; the splendid organisation of our troops; of pointing out to him our railways and electric telegraphs. But, above all, the occasion was not to be neglected of affording to an Eastern prince, reigning over feudal vassals, an opportunity of judging of the contentment of our people; their material prosperity; their satisfaction with our rule; the peaceable working of our revenue system. For such purposes no opportunity could be afforded at the frontier station of Peshawur. Even were Lahore to be appointed as the place of meeting, it might be objected that the Viceroy had consented to travel out of his way to meet the Amir. Lord Mayo evidently thought that in dealing with a people so jealous of etiquette, and so particular regarding ceremonial as are all Eastern races, it was most important that it should be impossible to draw such an inference. An easy mode of preventing this, and at the same time of affording to the Amir the opportunity above referred to, presented itself to his mind. He had intended to proceed in the month of March to the sanatorium of Simla. To reach that place it

was necessary to pass through the military cantonment of Umballa. At that cantonment, then, Lord Mayo proposed to meet the Amir. He would reach it in the natural course of his journey to the headquarters of his Government. The Amir, on the other hand, would have to traverse the Punjaub—would thus have an opportunity of noting all that was novel to him in our system—and would actually travel by railway, with a brief intermission, from Lahore to Umballa.

There were other reasons which appeared to the Viceroy to render the selection of Umballa incontrovertibly superior to that of any other station nearer the frontier. Short as had been his sojourn in India, Lord Mayo had yet found time to devote himself to the study of the relations existing between the paramount power and the dependent feudatories. It can be readily believed that the study of this subject must have awakened no little surprise at the state of disaffection which had been produced on the minds of the ill disposed amongst those feudatories by the bugbear of Russian invasion. He found that, in some cases, these men had actually persuaded themselves to believe that we were afraid of the Afghans as a nation, that we dreaded lest they should be induced to act as the advanced guard of a Russian invader. The arrival on our frontier of the Amir of Caubul—his progress through our northern provinces as a guest, suppliant for our friendship and support, to meet the Viceroy on his way to the summer headquarters of his Government—must inevitably tend, it seemed to Lord Mayo, to convince those chieftains of the absurdity of the ideas they had been led to entertain. A similar effect, resulting from the choice of Umballa as the place of meeting, would likewise be produced on those wild border tribes, who, ever since the annexation of the Punjaub, had, with a few intervals of cessation, acted the part of

robbers and plunderers, keeping our troops incessantly on the move. These borderers had heretofore regarded the ruler of Caubul as the Hetman of all their tribes, of whose connivance at, or at least sympathy with, their raids they might ever feel secure. To see that same ruler proceed voluntarily to a station in the heart of the British territories, to solicit the protection of the Viceroy of India, would certainly awaken in their minds sensations as novel as they would be striking.

For these reasons Umballa was chosen. Before adverting to the events which made the meeting at that station so memorable, we may state that the result, with respect to each and all of the reasons we have assigned, fully justified Lord Mayo's prescience. The Amir was impressed by the observations made by him in his journey through the Punjaub, to an extent which no one was prepared for, and which has subsequently made itself felt all over Afghanistan; the disaffected tributaries under our own sway were beyond measure amazed and disturbed at the power shown by the British Government to bring the ruler of Caubul so far from his own frontier; whilst upon the border tribes, with whom incursions into their neighbours' lands had so long been a law of their existence, the effect was reported to have been wonderfully soothing.

It is clear, then, that in its preliminary action Lord Mayo's policy was based upon solid foundations. He wished to show to Central Asia and the world, the still latent power of the British in the East. He determined, therefore, not to go out of his own way; not to give the smallest colour to the million rumours afloat, current in every bazaar in India, that the Government was afraid of the advance of Russia, and wished on that account to seek the favour of, and to subsidise, the Amir of Caubul. He was anxious that a clear and a satisfactory proof

should be given to the world, that the request for a meeting came from the Amir, and that he, the Viceroy, granted that interview solely as a favour to that prince. To place the terms upon which his guest was to be received beyond the shadow of a doubt, Lord Mayo issued instructions that the honours of an independent sovereign should be accorded to him. Whilst thus the Amir would be deprived of the excuse of pressing demands upon our Government as a tributary of the British, he and his chieftains would be alike convinced that it was one unalterable principle of British policy to see Afghanistan free and independent, saved from the horrors of further civil war, and enabled by the advice, support, and countenance of the British, to form a strong, just, and efficient government.

In accordance with the views we have endeavoured to trace out, the Amir was informed that the Viceroy would arrive at Umballa *en route* to Simla on the 27th March, and that it would afford his Excellency very great pleasure to avail himself of that opportunity of meeting the Amir to discuss with him the measures best adapted to cement friendly feelings between the two countries; that from the date of his reaching British territory to that of his return to the frontier, the Amir would be the guest of the British; and that throughout his journey all honours would be paid him by the chief civil officers of the districts and provinces through which he would pass.

Eagerly seizing the opportunity for which he had been longing ever since the death of his father had made him legitimate ruler of Afghanistan, the Amir left Caubul on the 16th February 1869, and reached Peshawur on the 3d March. Here he was received by a salute of twenty-one guns, and was escorted into the station by the principal civil and military authorities. Lieutenant-Colonel C.

Chamberlain and Dr Bellew were attached to his Highness, and arrangements were made for furnishing him and his suite liberally with supplies.

Travelling *vid* Rawul Pindee, the Amir reached Lahore on the 14th March. Here he was entertained and received in public durbar by the Lieutenant-Governor. Advantage was also taken of the opportunity to show him the troops, the guns, the railway, and the telegraphs; whilst he literally tired out many of those who were presented to him by the pertinent questions he put to them regarding the civil administration. He left Lahore on the 20th, and travelled *vid* Jullender and Loodhiana—the greater part of the way by rail—to Umballa, where he arrived on the evening of the 24th.

The meeting at Umballa between the Viceroy and the Amir was characterised by two phases, the ceremonial and the political. Utterly distinct as these were in themselves, there existed, nevertheless, a link between them. In all Asiatic proceedings “the sauce to meat is ceremony.” Upon conformity to the strict etiquette of a ceremonial depends often the success or failure of a negotiation. The value of the presents, the number of paces the host may advance to receive his guest, the language of the first formal conversation, affect, to a far greater extent than is the case in Europe, the success of the political discussions. Hence it is that ceremonial occupies so large a space in the interviews between great personages in India; hence, too, the necessity which devolves upon us of giving a detailed though brief account of the main incidents of the outer phase of the negotiations between Lord Mayo and the Amir of Caubul.

It is scarcely too much to affirm that as a mere spectacle, as a ceremonious display, the Durbar held at Umballa was inferior to none of its predecessors. It is difficult for

an English reader to realise the picturesque effect produced by the multitude of tents pitched in regular order on that unbroken plain, the blue ranges of the Himalayas rising to a visible height of some seven thousand feet in the background. In addition to the large reception-tents, those for the reception of the Earl and Countess of Mayo and their suite, for the members of the Viceroy's Council, for the Lieutenant-Governors of the Punjab and the North-west Provinces, for the Commander-in-Chief, for distinguished visitors, and for other high functionaries, there were the regimental camps for nearly six thousand men, of whom three-fifths were Europeans. The plain itself, unbroken and of vast extent, is perhaps better adapted for the accommodation of a multitude than any other in the North-west Provinces. Even after all the tents have been pitched, there is space for the manœuvring of troops practically illimitable; whilst, by reason of the flatness of the surface, the ground is admirably adapted for those movements of cavalry and artillery which add so much to the successful display of a field-day. We have alluded to the effect produced by the Himalayan scenery in the background. This would strike the most casual observer. But to appreciate it to its fullest extent, the spectator must have been accustomed to the long succession of level land characterising the plains of Hindostan, unbroken save here and there by mud-built villages, belts of trees, and patches of uncultivated jungle. From those glorious heights seemed to blow the revivifying breezes which made the temperature, albeit at the end of March, refreshing and pleasant. The sight of them suggested likewise other thoughts. It was not unknown to the Amir that those lofty ranges sheltered large bodies of our European soldiers during the months when the intense heat of the plains was more or less

fatal to the constitutions of the northern race; nor that from those very heights our troops had sallied forth on three memorable occasions to encounter and to vanquish the enemies of British supremacy in India—in 1845, to beat back the invasion of the Sikhs—in 1848, to complete the subjugation of that nation—and in 1857, to suppress the rebellion of the native soldiery we had pampered. He could not be unaware that thence, on provocation by whomsoever given, they would be ever ready to march again.

At five o'clock on the evening of the 24th March the train conveying the Amir reached Umballa. The photographic likenesses taken of Shir Ali have not probably been so extensively circulated in England as to render a description of his appearance unnecessary. He is a man of about five feet eight inches in height, broad shouldered, wide chested, and strong limbed to an extraordinary degree. His face has the Jewish expression common to the Afghan race, though by no means to such an extent as to prevent him being considered decidedly handsome. His eyes are dark, piercing, and cruel. The expression betokens great composure, a consciousness of strength, and a most determined resolution. He gives the spectator the idea of a man who would rather die than surrender his rights, who would stop short at nothing to assert them. And this undoubtedly is the case. Yet, strange contradiction! this is the man whom the death of his eldest son threw into a despair bordering upon madness—a despair such as rendered him even indifferent to the assertion of his right of sovereignty! He wore a Persian sheepskin hat, a brown over-all coat, and a pair of gold-striped trousers of English pattern. His manners were easy and collected. He was accompanied by his youngest son, Abdoolla Khan, a bright-looking boy of eight

years, and by several of his most devoted councillors, members of his own personal party. From all these the Amir was easily distinguishable by his regal bearing.

The Amir was received at the station by the Commander-in-Chief of the army in India, and was conducted by that high functionary to a house which had been selected as his residence whilst at Umballa. On the following morning a grand parade was held in his honour. The Amir drove to the parade-ground in a carriage-and-four, accompanied by Colonel Chamberlain and the Commissioner of Peshawur, and took up his post at the saluting-flag by the side of the Commander-in-Chief. Thence he watched the troops as they passed round in review. He was greatly struck by their appearance, especially by the horse-artillery, the composition of which appeared to him perfect. One troop, especially, horsed entirely by chestnuts, called forth his commendation. He eyed them with the keen glance of a tried soldier, and it was impossible to doubt that the admiration he freely expressed came really from his heart. But what perhaps called forth his most genuine admiration was the fact that all the orders, issuing from one man, supreme on the ground, were instantly obeyed by the troops; that, in a word, the instantaneous movement of all arms gave a ready testimony to the absolute will of the commander. This impressed him the more, because in his own country the feudal system of military service still prevailed. The Amir was there the admitted chief of a number of khans or lords, each bound to bring into the field a certain number of followers. Those followers, however, were the followers of the khans, not of the Amir. They would take orders only from their feudal chief, the head of their clan. Hence the impossibility of rapid and combined movements in an Afghan army. When, therefore,

the Amir beheld the English force moving as though every soldier of it were animated by the same idea, and that one and all combined to carry out the movement indicated by the commander on the ground, he could not conceal his admiration, exclaiming, "We have much to learn and to unlearn in Caubul before we can accomplish anything like that." Judging from some of the earlier measures taken by him after his return to his capital, we may safely affirm that he at that moment inwardly registered a vow to reform his own army on the model of that then exercising before him.

Meanwhile Lord Mayo had left Calcutta by special train. Accomplishing the journey of nearly twelve hundred miles in forty-three hours, he reached Umballa, accompanied by the Countess of Mayo, and attended by his staff, on the morning of the 27th March. The grandest preparations had been made for his reception. The Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, the Commander-in-Chief of the army, the members of Council, and other high officers of State, attended on the platform as he alighted from the railway carriage. From the station to the Viceregal camp the road was lined with troops, composed partly of British regiments, partly of native corps, partly of the contingents of our native feudatories in their picturesque and gaudy costumes. Mounting his horse, and followed by a brilliant staff, the Viceroy passed through a lane composed of the magnificent Highlanders, the stalwart Sikhs, the hardy Goorkhas of our own army, to encounter the swarthy troopers of Puttiala and Jheend, all intent on doing him honour. The weather was glorious; the sky clear; the atmosphere, refreshed by recent rain, even exhilarating. The arrangements were perfect. Not a single *contretemps* occurred to mar the dispositions of those to whom they had been intrusted. Slowly

the procession wended its way, its advance heralded by the firing of salutes, until the Viceregal tents were reached. Lord Mayo then alighted to prepare for the ceremonial which was to follow in the afternoon.

At five o'clock the Durbar was held. The highest functionaries under the Viceroy were deputed to meet the Amir as he alighted from his carriage, and to conduct him, under a royal salute, to the door of the tent. Shir Ali was accompanied by his little son, and attended by his principal chiefs. As he approached, Lord Mayo advanced a few steps from the entrance of the tent, where he had been standing, shook him cordially by the hand, and led him to the dais. On reaching the thrones placed for the two great personages, Lord Mayo turned to Shir Ali, bade him, in the name of the Queen, a hearty welcome, and expressed the gratification he felt at being able to receive him as the guest of her Majesty. He trusted, he added, that the visit might be the commencement of many years of amity between her Majesty and his Highness, and of mutual confidence and goodwill between the two nations. The Amir having made a suitable reply, they sat down, and the offering of the presents took place. Of these there were fifty-one trays for the Amir himself, twenty-one for his little son, and twenty-one for each of his three principal councillors. The presents for the Amir consisted of guns, rifles, shields, clocks, watches, gold snuff-boxes, gold and silver caps, flagons, and salvers. That the Amir highly appreciated them, especially the rifles, was evident from his heightened colour, and the increased sparkle of his eye, as he gazed at them. The dignified and courteous manner of Lord Mayo had set the Amir entirely at his ease; and as he glanced round the magnificent tent at the soldiers and statesmen assembled to do him

honour, he could not help showing the triumph he undoubtedly felt at the realisation of the great wish of his heart, since his accession five years previously to the throne—his cordial recognition by the British.

Meanwhile, by means of an interpreter, a conversation of a formal nature was carried on between the Viceroy and the Amir. On its conclusion, Lord Mayo rose, and taking in his hand a jewel-hilted sword of great value which lay beside him, presented it gracefully to the Amir, accompanying the present by the expression of a hope that whenever employed against the enemies of his country, the sword might be useful to him. The immediate and *impromptu* reply of Shir Ali was conceived in the same cordial spirit, and conveyed in terms not less suited to the occasion. "I hope, indeed," he replied, "to wield this sword with effect, not only against my own enemies, but against the enemies of the British Government." With a few more ceremonies, the business of the Durbar came to a conclusion. The Amir and his followers were reconducted to their carriages with the same etiquette which had characterised their arrival, and the great meeting was over.

The Amir could not conceal his gratification at his reception. Pleased as he undoubtedly was with the presents, he had been still more delighted with the manner of the Viceroy. It had been so exactly what it should be, that this rude chieftain, whose life had been spent mainly in the stormy conflict of real war, or in weaving plans of violence and intrigue, was completely won by it—it had penetrated to his very heart. On his way home he could talk of little else. Even after his return to his own house, when, having disrobed himself of his state garments, he sat down to indulge in his customary beverage of green tea, and to discuss, as was

his wont at such a time, the affairs of the day with his officers, he could not avoid reverting to this subject, repeating over and over again how much he liked Lord Mayo, and adding, "He is such a nice fellow, and then he is so big." Not less significant was the remark he made about Lord Mayo's little son, a boy six years old. "He has eyes," he said, "out of which the man shines; he comes of a family of men."

On the Monday morning following, Lord Mayo returned the visit of the Amir. The Viceroy, on alighting, was received by the Amir, who had advanced beyond the entrance of his tent to meet him, and conducted to the dais. The conversation commenced as soon as the great personages were seated. The Amir praised our army, stating that he could never see enough of our troops. The Viceroy assured his Highness, in reply, of the pleasure it would give her Majesty to hear so favourable an opinion of her soldiers from so tried and so successful a warrior. The usual wishes for perpetual alliance between the two countries were likewise freely expressed. But this conversation, like that of the preceding Saturday, was purely formal. On its conclusion, the Amir, unbuckling his own sword, an heirloom in his family regularly transmitted to the representative of the Barukzde family, presented it with a few complimentary words to Lord Mayo, and reconducted him to his carriage. The formal part of the ceremonial had thus on both sides been performed.

We do not propose to enter into a minute or detailed account of the manner in which the Amir occupied the lighter hours of his stay at Umballa. It will suffice if we state that he attended races, where he selected as his favourite the horse which actually proved the winner of the race of the day; he came to see a steeplechase, at which, contrary to his expressed opinion, and greatly to his surprise, all the horses

but one succeeded in taking all the jumps. At an evening party—the first he had ever visited, and all the details of which were new to him—he displayed the refined courtesy of an English gentleman, listening with great good-humour and apparent interest to an Italian air and a Border lay, and entering into conversation with all who were presented to him. But he was most gratified with the reviews, which came off in regular succession. To one of these, intended to represent a sham fight, he came mounted on an elephant. Wherever the thick of the battle appeared, there was his elephant to be seen. He thought it glorious, magnificent, second only to the real thing. On another occasion he came to inspect the artillery practice, at the result of which, at a distance of sixteen hundred yards, he could not conceal his surprise and admiration. "Splendid! splendid!" was the exclamation that constantly issued from his lips. On the conclusion of the practice he expressed his admiration to the officer commanding the troop. Observing his arm in a sling, he inquired how the accident had happened. When informed it was from a fall whilst hog-hunting, he was greatly surprised. "How is it possible," he exclaimed, "that such a man should take pleasure in slaying the unclean animal? Surely he has amusement enough in these guns!" He likewise inspected, and greatly admired, the mountain battery of guns on the old pattern, which had been presented to him. On the 3d April he departed on his return-trip to Caubul, immensely gratified by the reception accorded to him, deeply impressed by much that he had witnessed—firmly resolved, to use his own expression, to make his chieftains unlearn much they were in the habit of practising, in order that they might learn instead the lessons which his Umballa experiences had pointed out to him as indispensably necessary for the stability of his rule.

But whilst affairs on the surface were thus happily managed, questions of great importance were being discussed by the two principals in private. To understand, so far as their true history has been ascertained, the nature of these questions, we propose to revert to the moment when the first opportunity was afforded to the Amir of disclosing his secret wishes to the representatives of the British power.

We say, so far as their true history has been ascertained; for up to the present moment neither Lord Mayo nor the Secretary of State has thought proper to publish the details of the secret conferences. But the want of reticence displayed by the Amir himself, alike at Umballa and on his return-journey to Peshawur, has long since deprived those details of the secret character they were supposed to bear. And although their true history has been but partially revealed to the Indian press, there can be no indiscretion now in withdrawing the veil which has concealed the more important of them from the British public.

It would appear that the Amir left Caubul full of hope as to the aid he might receive from the British Government. The reception he met with at Peshawur and Lahore, considered by him to be in a great degree due to the prestige of his victories, so worked upon his naturally grasping character, that, before he reached Umballa, the hopes he had entertained at Caubul had swollen to certainties, and he had prepared himself to prefer demands of a most extraordinary nature.

Such demands, there can be no manner of doubt, he did actually put forward. But it was evident, in fact he scarcely attempted to conceal from those with whom he afterwards conversed, that the preference of them was intermingled with a suspicion as to our real intentions. Such a suspicion had been infused into his mind by the refusal of the Anglo-Indian Gov-

ernment to aid him even by sympathy during his contest with his brothers; and it had been more recently pressed upon him by the party in Caubul by which his journey to Umballa had been opposed. Nor, in spite of the reception accorded to him, could he refrain from giving utterance to the idea which rankled in his mind, that the Anglo-Indian policy of recognising only the *de facto* ruler, even of a portion of his country, during the great struggle for power, had been deliberately framed for the purpose of weakening Afghanistan, by encouraging the claims of rival pretenders, and thereby prolonging anarchy and civil war. It was with him evidently a firm conviction, that if the British Government had given him their strong moral support, had presented him with the few muskets he asked for, when, after his father's death, he ascended the throne; if, subsequently, that same Government had abstained from recognising the right of his brothers to make war upon him; if it had extended to him then the support it offered him at the close of 1868, then never would there have been civil war in his country, never would the opportunity have been afforded to our Government of recognising his rivals as rulers. He repeatedly expressed his conviction that it was the hasty and inopportune recognition of those rivals, the announcement to Afghanistan and the world that the British Government would recognise only the *de facto* ruler, whoever he might be, which had kept the country in civil war, and raised the hopes of every disaffected chieftain throughout the land.

These thoughts Shir Ali could not conceal. They constituted in his mind a festering grievance, which, even in the midst of all his honours, would sometimes instil doubts as to our sincerity. It is important to remember this. Whether his opinions were well founded or baseless, true or false, is scarcely

the question. It cannot be denied that they represented the impressions which the past policy of the Anglo-Indian Government had produced on the most liberal minds among the Afghan people. Viewed in this aspect, they were naturally calculated to produce a deep impression on all who listened to them. Shir Ali made no secret of his dissatisfaction with our past policy; and it was probably the knowledge that he was dissatisfied which gave a colour to the exaggerated reports, prevalent at the time, as to the concessions and subsidies which had been assigned to him.

Under the difficult circumstances thus presented for its consideration, the conduct of the Government of Lord Mayo was distinguished by great tact. Unswervingly loyal to the policy of his predecessor, jealous to refrain from binding his Government to any engagement for the future, Lord Mayo yet succeeded in dissipating all the suspicions of the Amir, in satisfying him alike as to our disinterestedness and as to our latent power. In such a work Lord Mayo's best ally was himself. Against his friendly manifestations the dark spirit which had accompanied the Amir to Umballa struggled in vain. He became, after a few interviews, perfectly satisfied as to the loyal intentions of our Government. That satisfaction once established, the overgrown superstructure of exaggerated demands fell at once to the ground. He was glad then to take what Sir John Lawrence would have given in 1868, what Lord Mayo was ready to give in 1869. He left Umballa, then, perfectly easy in his own mind; he left it, what perhaps even his father had never been, a *trusting* ally of the British. And it is certain that Lord Mayo effected this desirable object without for one moment relaxing his determination to yield no demands which might compro-

mise the policy upon which he and his Council had resolved.

The Amir had never concealed his desire to obtain from Lord Mayo such concessions as an offensive and defensive treaty, an annual subsidy, a promise of active interference on our part against his enemies. But the utmost he did obtain from Lord Mayo was a full assurance of cordial recognition on the part of the British Government, and of its support in his endeavour to establish a strong, just, and merciful government in Afghanistan, as well as of a complete discountenancing of any efforts on the part of his rivals to plunge the country again into civil war. Yet so great had been the personal influence upon his mind of Lord Mayo, so vivid the impressions produced by all he had seen of British India, that the Amir gratefully accepted the alternative offered by the British Government in *lieu* of his own impossible demands.

The policy, then, adopted by the British Government at the conferences, and which, as distinguished from that which preceded it, may properly be termed the Umballa policy, was still, like that other, a policy of non-intervention. There was, nevertheless, between the two, a striking and material difference. The ante-Umballa policy, being a policy of absolute abstention, of recognising the ruler of the hour, tended to prolong civil war in Afghanistan, and therefore to the weakness and political nullity of that country; it rendered real friendship between British India and Afghanistan impossible. The Umballa policy, on the other hand, equally an abstention policy, yet held out the right hand of friendship to the lawful ruler of Afghanistan, gained his confidence, satisfied him of our power, of our disinterestedness, of our wish for the formation under his auspices of a powerful kingdom on our frontier. Nay, more; it gave him the opportunity, by which he

has since endeavoured to profit, of acquiring practical experience as to the means by which his kingdom might be purged from some of the worst vices of feudalism, heretofore its bane, and the foundations of a uniform system be established in all its provinces.

Though but few months have elapsed since the promulgation of the Umballa policy, it has yet been rich in results. In Afghanistan itself, the disturbances which had continued with scarcely any intermission for five years have ceased as if by magic. During those five years, the weakness of Afghanistan, caused by her internal feuds, had tended to encourage the advance of Russia on the north, the aggressions of Persia on the west. Since the proclamation of the Umballa policy, the increased strength of Afghanistan as an independent power may be inferred alike by the angry articles which have appeared in the Russian journals, and by the preparations made by Persia in the neighbourhood of Seistan. Prior to its enunciation, British India had a weak and suspicious power on her frontier, ready at any moment to become an enemy. By its enunciation that weak and suspicious power has been changed into a friend, bound to her by the most powerful of all ties, the tie of self-interest.

It is to be hoped that the Umballa policy may, in the interests of British India, be maintained and extended. There can be no greater guarantee of peace in India than the cultivation with our neighbours of friendly and even cordial relations, the fostering of the endeavour to promote among them the blessings of good government, that by degrees they may come to regard the arts of peace and the speculations of commerce as more than compensating for the gain of battles however glorious, and for territorial acquisitions however proudly gained. The time may be long before such a feeling may be firmly

rooted in the hearts of a people like the Afghans; but it may be safely asserted that the Umballa policy of Lord Mayo has at least sown the seed.

Even at the time we write, a silent revolution is progressing in Afghanistan. The feudal system of service has been abolished, and a system of regular payment to the troops substituted for it. A regular revenue administration has been organised. The servants of the Government have been made salaried officers of State, instead of being, as they were before, *quasi-independent* officials. The power of the great nobles has been curbed, and the independence of provincial governors restricted. It has been the great aim of the Amir to consolidate his kingdom. Prior to 1869 it was composed of five provinces, virtually independent, owing him an allegiance which often had to be enforced by arms. Inspired by the example of British rule, as seen by him in the northern provinces of our empire, the Amir has endeavoured to change all this. Instead of ruling over Candaharees, Heratees, Caubulees, and others, he wishes to govern one race of Afghans. One government, one army, one treasury, one nation—these are his watchwords. It is not to be imagined that, proceeding as he has in his reforms with all the fervour and energy of a man thoroughly in earnest, he has encountered no opposition. That was hardly to be expected. Yet whatever opposition has hitherto manifested itself he has successfully beaten down. We are aware that when, at Umballa, he disclosed his intentions in the way of reform on his return to Caubul, he was advised not to be in too great a hurry, to proceed warily and cautiously. His reply indicated enormous self-confidence. "If I cannot lead them," he said, "I will drive them." And he has literally carried out this boast. Partly leading and partly driving, he has hitherto met

with extraordinary success in carrying through all his measures for the consolidation of Afghanistan as a united kingdom under his sole rule. Of all the spectacles presenting themselves to the study of the philosopher and the politician, this is perhaps the most curious and the most interesting. To see a rude Asiatic warrior engaged in fashioning his Government according to the model of that of his European neighbours, is a

problem to arrest the attention of all. He may succeed, or he may fail; but the fact of his making the attempt is in itself remarkable. It is at all events no weak testimony to the value attached to the principles of British administration in India by a prince aspiring to govern; and if it succeed, as succeed it may, it will deserve to be quoted as one of the most striking results ever obtained from the peaceful contact of civilisation and barbarism.

LORD LYTTON'S COMEDY.

NOR one of those fairies who can make or mar a mortal's career was forgotten in sending out the invitations to Lord Lytton's christening. There was no powerful malignant hag who stayed aloof from the festival, nursing her injury, and withholding her gift, the absence of which would be as fatal to prosperity as the loss of a linchpin to the progress of a triumphal car; or who, coming uninvited, neutralised the beneficence of her sister fairies with a baleful offering. All those potent and capricious shapers of destiny whom it is so easy to estrange, so hard to propitiate, thronged to the ceremony, lavish of their smiles and prodigal of their benefits. On their *protégé* they showered invention and wit and wisdom, knowledge of man, knowledge of the world, and capacity for the world's affairs; and to these was added that versatility, rare in any case—most rare in combination with solid excellences—which has found such multitudinous issue in novels, poetry, essays, oratory, and the drama. All was completed by the bestowal of the untiring industry which keeps these powers in brilliant action, and which, (dropped commonly enough in the cradles of those to whom other favours are denied, and often, un-

happily, lending to dulness such a tremendous power of afflicting mankind) is so seldom associated with high and various capacity. No patient conscientious founder of a name out of nothing has ever shown a more constant energy, a more cheerful welcoming of toil, than the author who started in life already endowed with so large a share of what generally forms the allurements and reward of exertion. Throughout his career he has seemed to seek repose only in variety of labour: the recreation of the statesman has been the writing of novels; the novelist has sought relaxation in the Parliamentary arena and the Cabinet; and the odds and ends of leisure, which most busy men are content to devote to such pleasant distractions as lotos-eating, have been given to the production of essays, translations, or original dramas,—his success in any one of which minor paths would have sufficed for a respectable literary reputation. Some of his plays, "Money," "Richelieu," and "The Lady of Lyons," were not merely successful for a time, but have kept the stage for more than a generation; and the last named has been acted at two London theatres within this month past. And with all this quantity of production, the

quality is always excellent. Unlike many famous and voluminous authors, he (to use a phrase that trades-unions will render familiar to us) never "scamps" his work; thought and conscientious art are everywhere visible between the lines. Goethe himself has never more profoundly sought the conditions of literary excellence than Lord Lytton, who, it may be safely said, has never planned a work, devised an incident, nor developed a character—nay, even written a paragraph—without due regard to the exigencies of art. The prefaces to later editions of his novels contain expositions of principles which, if studied by some of our novelists, might be of infinite service, by enabling them, if not to attain greater excellence, yet at least to commit less palpable blunders. There have, of late, appeared some indications that, after so long and laborious a career, he was about to give himself a longer interval of repose. He has exchanged the busy region of the Commons for the serenest atmosphere of the Peers: it is some years since he charmed the world with a novel; and the well-pondered, carefully-wrought translation of Horace, with its delightful essay on the characteristics of the poet, republished this year from our pages, though really involving a great amount of labour, might seem to many rather the fruit of scholarly leisure than of fresh intellectual activity. But it is just at this time of seeming repose that he flashes out upon us with an original work, cast in the most condensed and exacting of all forms, the dramatic, and even in that form a novelty, for it is a *rhymed* comedy. This is manifestly an experiment; for though rhyme has heretofore been applied to burlesques, to prologues and epilogues, to the chorus, to the ending of scenes and plays, and even in a few cases to tragedies, we do not know of any previous case of a pure English comedy in rhyme. Not only is the verse rhymed, but, as will be seen in the

specimens we shall offer, it is of a measure not hitherto employed on the stage—that of Goldsmith's "Retaliation" and "Epistle to Lord Clare"—selected, perhaps, as admitting the variety of the double rhyme. There can be no doubt that an epigram gains in neatness, an antithesis in force, and a sarcasm in point, by being expressed in rhyme, and that ordinary thoughts receive a new value by being tersely and melodiously embodied. Therefore, in the case of a comedy intended only to be read, it may well happen that the merits will be greatly enhanced by the adoption of this new vehicle: of the advantage in the case of an acted play we are less positive. Whether any inevitable associations with burlesques and extravaganzas will be allowed to influence the critical spirit of the audience it is difficult to foresee; at any rate such an objection ought not, as being accidental in its nature, to prejudice that part of an audience whose judgment is worth most. But we think that in striking the balance of gain and loss in this experiment, the possible diminution of stage illusion by the increase in the artificial quality of the medium will not be without weight. To our minds it will be to diminished purpose that Sir Robert Walpole is dressed exactly after the fashion of his time, and that his sentiments are strictly in accordance with his character, if he delivers his opinions on statecraft in rhymed verse. The Minister of the Georges may in such a case vanish, and the whole scene will perhaps be removed to the region of vague epochs and unreal characters. The case of blank verse is different; it is, to the ear, only refined and melodious prose lending solemnity to grave thoughts, and grace to lighter sentiment. But that Shakespeare judged even blank verse an inappropriate vehicle for comedy is shown by the fact that his comic business is almost invariably transacted in prose, that most of his comic characters never

speak verse at all, and that others who do speak it descend to prose in comic scenes. Thus Prince Hal, who uses blank verse when defying Hotspur, and trying on his father's crown, conforms to the language of Falstaff, Bardolph, and Quickly, in his colloquies with them; and Cassio, who reciprocates verse with Desdemona, uses a more ordinary dialect when, being in liquor, he discourses fustian with his own shadow. However, we do not wish to dogmatise on this novel question, and fully believe that the play contains in its present form all the elements of success.

The plot of this comedy is excellent. It is of smoothness and neatness all compact, and is woven with love, of course, for one of its main threads, and with politics for the other. The central figure is the jovial one of Sir Robert Walpole, the famous Minister who was the main prop of the Hanoverian dynasty and the Protestant succession. Everybody who knows anything about him knows that his name has become a byword as the audacious and unscrupulous advocate of a policy of corruption. Yet the stigma that attaches to him on this score is not deep; he is one of those genial personages who, popular in their own age, mollify the censors of an after-time with their pleasant qualities, and are the spoiled children of history. In his fondness for power, his determination to "bear, like the Turk, no brother near the throne," his sturdy good sense, jovial manners, and good-humour, and his power of managing the House of Commons, Lord Palmerston resembles him more than any other of our Prime Ministers, and the parallel might probably be carried still farther. As to the corruption imputed to him, whatever the degree of it (and no doubt it has been greatly exaggerated), there is much extenuation in the facts that he never turned any of the stream of public money with which he

so freely irrigated the field of party, into his private reservoirs; and that he resorted to bribes as the only effectual means of retaining the power which, as he honestly believed, and as was certainly true, it was indispensable for the peace of the country that he, and he alone, should possess. And even if he had been guilty of corruption to the full extent with which he has been charged, his system of maintaining political influence was pure and virtuous compared with that which in our time we see practised as a matter of course in that country of whose institutions many of our patriots are such ardent admirers, where each newly-elected Executive rewards its supporters with the spoils of party down to the very lowest official post, and where politics have thus become not a vocation, nor a profession, but a trade. The fat knight of Eastcheap, when charged with one of his delinquencies, says, "Thou knowest that in the state of innocency Adam fell, and what should poor Jack Falstaff do in the days of villany?" In like manner Sir Robert, if put on his defence now, might well plead, that if such things are done in these days of political enlightenment and matured public virtue, it is not to be wondered at that poor Bob Walpole fell in times when a vote was generally regarded as convertible property; when many a patriot stood ready to be knocked down to the highest bidder, Hanoverian or Jacobite; and when in a neighbouring State the people were taxed to exhaustion, and the exchequer rendered bankrupt, in order that the king's illegitimate children, his mistresses with all their friends and relations, and a butterfly aristocracy, might be enriched by the public revenues.

While, then, there is nothing in Walpole's public character so inexcusable as to deprive him of sympathy as a dramatic personage, there is much in the man to engage

our regard and approval. He was as remarkable for lenity to his political foes as for prodigality to his political friends. He was not merely a vigorous and acute debater, but the very father of Parliamentary debate. In private life he was, in a jovial age, one of the most jovial of men, drank hard, and feasted, when not to drink hard and feast was to fail in the most important of social duties; and yet his brain was never the less clear for his potations. Joyous of temper, easy of wit, plump and rosy of aspect, his person, as well as his habits, was that of the country gentleman of the time; and even "*ce vilain ventre*" which provoked the sarcasm of Queen Caroline, harmonised with the general appearance and character of the good-natured *bon vivant*. The epoch of the comedy is the year following the Rebellion of 1715, when two of the Jacobite lords had expiated, with their heads, their adhesion to the losing cause, and others awaited execution in the Tower. Walpole was not then, nor ever had been, the actual chief of the Cabinet; but his power of debate, influence in the country, and

ascendancy over Lord Townshend the Prime Minister, really rendered his influence paramount. He comes on the stage, therefore, clothed with the highest authority of the State; and as his relations with the rest of the *dramatis personæ* render his social influence as unquestioned as his political ascendancy, he dominates the situation at every stage, and finally appears as the destiny or providence of the play. Round this robust central figure are grouped some politicians who, having no historical existence, yet serve admirably to bring out the characteristics of Walpole: John Veasey, a confidant to whom he imparts his thoughts in a way very superior to soliloquy; and two leaders of sections of parties, Blount and Bellair, who, because they are not only politicians, but lovers of the same woman—blend the two main threads of interest. Blount is what was in those days known as a patriot, and patriots were then, as they have continued to be, of somewhat uproarious and aggressive public virtue; whom Veasey characterises to Walpole as—

"Your sternest opponent, half Cato, half Brutus."

Politics, however, and general inaptitude for the softer graces, have not prevented Mr Blount from entertaining in very mature age (about sixty, apparently) a passion for the heroine. Sir Sidney Bellair is a young member who, if not a Jacobite, is at least a warm defender of the condemned peers, and a vigorous assailant of Walpole; and he possesses that particular union of social and intellectual claims which has always

had such attraction for Lord Lytton, since to eloquence he adds the qualities that have made him "chief of the beaux;" clever, brilliant, gay, he is the Pelham of the stage. Walpole is earnestly bent on finding the market-price of these two men, for on their help he relies to carry the bill for changing triennial to septennial parliaments, a measure then and since thought essential to the peace of the realm at that particular epoch.

WALPOLE.

I could make—see this list—our majority sure,
If by buying two men I could sixty secure;
For as each of these two is the chief of a section,
That will vote black or white at its leader's direction,
Let the pipe of the shepherd but lure the bell-wether,
And he folds the whole flock, wool and cry, altogether.

In the first act all the main-measure in a conversation between springs of the piece are indicated Walpole and his confidant :— (as they should be), and in great

WALPOLE.

Yes, the change from Queen Anne to King George, we must own,
Renders me and the Whigs the sole props of the throne.
For the Tories their Jacobite leanings disgrace,
And a Whig is the only safe man for a place.

VEASEY.

And the Walpoles of Houghton, in all their relations,
Have been Whigs to the backbone for three generations.

WALPOLE.

Ay, my father and mother contrived to produce
Their eighteen sucking Whigs for the family use,
Of which number one only, without due reflection,
Braved the wrath of her house by a Tory connection.
But, by Jove, if her Jacobite husband be living,
I will make him a Whig.

VEASEY.

How ?

WALPOLE.

By something worth giving :

For I loved her in boyhood, that pale pretty sister ;
And in counting the Walpoles still left, I have mist her.
(Pauses in emotion, but quickly recovers himself.)
What *was* it I said ?—Oh,—the State and the Guelph,
For their safety, must henceforth depend on myself.
The revolt, scarcely quenched, has live sparks in its ashes ;
Nay, fresh seeds for combustion were sown by its flashes.
Each example we make dangerous pity bequeaths ;
For no Briton likes blood in the air that he breathes.

VEASEY.

Yes ; at least there's one rebel whose doom to the block
Tho' deserved, gives this soft-hearted people a shock.

WALPOLE.

Lord Nithsdale, you mean ; handsome, young, and just wedded ;
A poor head, that would do us much harm if beheaded.

VEASEY.

Yet they say you rejected all prayers for his life.

WALPOLE.

It is true ; but in private I've talked to his wife :
She had orders to see him last night in the Tower.
And—

VEASEY.

Well ?

WALPOLE *(looking at his watch)*.

Wait for the news—'tis not yet quite the hour."

These two hints of a promising stray sister somewhere, and of an interview between a Jacobite lord in the Tower and his wife, not without the connivance of Walpole, are left to fructify in the mind of the observant reader. Sir Robert then proceeds to discuss the question of bribing Blount and Bellair; and his friend Veasey, saturated apparently with Walpolean principles, undertakes to fish for both with the baits that the astute Minister thinks most likely to lure

them. Bellair is the first to appear, and Veasey, after some adroit flattery, knowing that neither money nor place will tempt the wealthy well-born beau, tries inducements better suited to his age and condition. A duke's daughter and a peerage will, he hints, reward the pliant politician. But he has mistaken his man, who, resenting the attempt at first, presently remembers that it does not pertain to beaux to be angry.

VEASEY,

No offence. Why that frown?

BELLAIR (*relapsing into his habitual ease*).

Nay, forgive me. Tho' man, I'm a man about town;
And so graceful a compliment could not offend
Any man about town, from a Minister's friend.
Still, if not from the frailty of mortals exempt,
Can a mortal be tempted where sins do not tempt?
Of my rank and my fortune I *am* so conceited,
That I don't, with a wife, want those blessings repeated.
And tho' flattered to learn I should strengthen the Peers—
Give me still our rough House with its laughter and cheers.
Let the Lords have their chamber—I grudge not its powers;
But for badgering a Minister nothing like ours!
Whisper that to the Minister;—sir, your obedient. (*Turns away*.)

VEASEY (*aside*).

Humph! I see we must hazard the ruder expedient.
If some Jacobite pit for his feet we can dig,
He shall hang as a Tory, or vote as a Whig.

Unsuccessful with Bellair, he sets about the temptation of Blount, by hinting that Sir Robert wishes to confer with him on a question of coal-dues, about which both are of one mind. Blount promises to wait on the Minister—and this, the political element of the play, being thus in motion, the other, the amatory ingredient, is introduced. Blount, after complimenting his young friend Bellair on his late speech, proposes that they should join forces to oust Walpole. Bellair, in reply, hints playfully that the other's chance of buying him is better than Walpole's, for that he has watched the patriot

lately, when, half disguised, he had made his way to the house of a certain Widow Vizard, this house being also the home of a young lady, Lucy Wilmot, with whom the beau had fallen desperately in love after rescuing her one night from the clutches of those roystering blades the Mohawks—a savage metropolitan tribe, much given to outrage the weak of both sexes, which, though declined greatly in the social scale, still flourishes under the patronage of the police and the respectful forbearance of the public. Being denied admittance by Dame Vizard, Sir Sidney has held surreptitious interviews with Lucy at her win-

dow, in which, however, their eyes were the chief means of communication, and he now appeals to his friends as *l'ami de la maison* to further his suit. Blount, thus adjured, tells him that Lucy is a poor girl of mean family, who, at her mother's death, had been placed with Mrs Vizard by a charitable stranger, in order to qualify herself as a teacher of music. But Blount omits to mention the reason of his own agitation throughout this colloquy—which is, that *he* is the charitable stranger, and that he has himself fallen in love with the object of his bounty with the frank infatuation which swains so mature not unfrequently display. Their interview is interrupted, and the first act ended, by the entrance of the newsman with the papers containing the account of Lord Nithsdale's escape in his wife's clothes from the Tower.

Here, then, we have all the links indicated whose harmonious twist-

ings and untwistings form the action of the play. Sir Robert, for a purpose higher than personal ambition, is bent on gaining the two politicians; he remembers tenderly a long-lost Jacobite sister—a young lady with a mysterious Jacobite mother is loved by both the young and the old politician—and Lord Nithsdale has escaped from the Tower. The connection of this last incident with the plot is presently seen. For Nithsdale is brought for refuge by the Jacobites who aided his escape to the house of Mrs Vizard, well known as a partisan of the Stuarts, and she conceals him, disguised in his wife's dress, in a bedroom. Meanwhile Blount has had his interview with Walpole, who, holding out his bribe nakedly and confidently, again proves to have mistaken his man, for he meets with a prompt refusal. The scene continues thus:—

WALPOLE.

You are not to be bought, sir—astonishing man !
 Let us argue that point. If creation you scan,
 You will find that the children of Adam prevail
 O'er the beasts of the field but by barter and sale.
 Talk of coals—if it were not for buying and selling,
 Could you coax from Newcastle a coal to your dwelling ?
 You would be to your own fellow-men good for nought,
 Were it true, as you say, that you're not to be bought,
 If you find men worth nothing—say, don't you despise them ?
 And what proves them worth nothing ?—why, nobody buys them.
 But a man of such worth as yourself ! nonsense—come,
 Sir, to business ; I want you—I buy you ; the sum ?

BLOUNT.

Is corruption so brazen ? are manners so base ?

WALPOLE (*aside*).

That means he don't much like the Paymaster's place.

(*With earnestness and dignity.*)

Pardon, Blount, I spoke lightly ; but do not mistake,—
 On mine honour, the peace of the land is at stake.
 Yes, the peace and the freedom ! Were Hampden himself
 Living still, would he side with the Stuart or Guelph ?
 When the Cæsars the freedom of Rome overthrew,
 All its forms they maintained—'twas its spirit they slew !
 Shall the freedom of England go down to the grave ?
 No ! the forms let us scorn, so the spirit we save.

BLOUNT.

England's peace and her freedom depend on your bill ?

WALPOLE (*seriously*).

Thou know'st it—and therefore——

BLOUNT.

My aid you ask still ?

WALPOLE.

Nay, no longer *I* ask, 'tis thy country petitions.

BLOUNT.

But you talked about terms.

WALPOLE (*pushing pen and paper to him*).

There, then, write your conditions.

(BLOUNT *writes, folds the paper, gives it to WALPOLE, bows, and exit.*)

WALPOLE (*reading*).

" 'Mongst the men who are bought to save England inscribe me,
And my bribe is the head of the man who would bribe me."
Eh ! my head ! That ambition is much too high-reaching ;
I suspect that the crocodile hints at impeaching.
And he calls himself honest ! What highwayman's worse ?
Thus to threaten my life when I offer my purse.
Hem ! he can't be in debt, as the common talk runs,
For the man who scorns money has never known duns.
And yet *have* him I must ! Shall I force or entice ?
Let me think—let me think ; every man has his price.

(*Exit WALPOLE.*)

Mrs Vizard has scarcely concealed Nithsdale when Blount appears, and taking her to task for permitting her charge to make Bellair's acquaintance, bids her send Lucy to him, into whose reluctant ear he proceeds to pour the impassioned tale of his elderly affection. Taking her agitated silence for consent, he announces to Mrs Vizard that he will privately marry her ward next day, and in the mean time, as he quits the house, he recommends that she shall be securely guarded. At that moment the newsman is heard underneath the window proclaiming the escape of Nithsdale, with a description of the dress he wore, and the offer of a thousand guineas for his recapture. Mrs Vizard recognises her captive in the description ; the reward is too much for her fidelity, and she goes

off to betray him to Walpole, first locking up the house with her two charges in it. Here ensues the busy portion of the play ; for Nithsdale and Lucy being each in a room that opens on the stage, and each anxious to escape from the house,—he, because he has overheard Mrs Vizard's intended treachery—she to avoid Blount,—that kind of complication and interest ensues with which we are familiar in the comedies of all ages. The two meet. Lucy, predisposed to aid the Jacobites, lends a sympathetic ear to the tale of the supposed Jacobite lady, allows Nithsdale to exchange the now perilous disguise of his wife's dress for a gown and mantle of her own, and helps him to escape by the window. Bellair, coming under the balcony in hopes of an interview with Lucy, sees her, as he

fancies, to his great surprise, in the act of descending, accosts her, and endeavouring to lift her hood, finds a strange face beneath it. But as Nithsdale recognises in Bellair the member who pleaded so well the cause of the Jacobites in Parliament, he at once confides in him. Sir Sidney, of course, is prompt to aid him, and the fugitive goes off in the Beau's carriage, that is waiting near, to Blackwall for embarkation. Returning to the balcony, Bellair

sees there this time the real Lucy, to whose Juliet he plays Romeo so effectively that they part with the understanding that he is to return the same night at ten with a ladder to carry her off to his house, where a priest and friends will be ready to celebrate the bridal; and so ends act second.

In the third act, Blount, in St James's Park, thus characteristically soliloquises:—

BLOUNT.

So the parson is found and the cottage is hired—
Every fear was dispelled when my rival retired.
Ev'n my stern mother country must spare from my life
A brief moon of that honey one tastes with a wife!
And then strong as a giant, recruited by sleep,
On corruption and Walpole my fury shall sweep.
'Mid the cheers of the House I will state in my place
How the bribes that he proffered were flung in his face.
Men shall class me amid those examples of worth
Which, alas! become daily more rare on this earth;
And Posterity, setting its brand on the front
Of a Walpole, select for its homage a Blount."

To him enter Bellair, who hastens to impart to him, as a particularly eligible confidant, that Lucy, as he finds, detests her ancient swain (known to her only as Mr Jones), and has agreed to become Lady Bellair that very night, concluding by begging Blount to act as her father and give her away. The patriot, naturally exasperated at this pleasing intelligence, is ready for any step, however iniquitous, that will foil his rival; and the father of evil, having thus prepared the soil for a crop of villany, presently sows it with seed. For some Jacobites, friends of Nithsdale, enter, bringing a note from him to Bellair, full of gratitude, and promises of great honours and rewards if the Stuarts should ever recover the throne, and also warning him against Mrs Vizard; and Bellair, acknowledging his share in Nithsdale's escape, discusses this note with Blount, who, perceiving what foul advantage it will give

him, secures it, shows it presently to Veasey, and recommends him, nothing loath to adopt the suggestion, to make Bellair a prisoner, stipulating, however, for the security of his life and fortune. His rival thus out of the way, he resolves to dispense with the doubtful assistance of Mrs Vizard, and standing beneath Lucy's window in Bellair's place, to take full advantage of the mistake that will place her in his power.

Veasey coming to Walpole with the news of Bellair's complicity in Nithsdale's escape, procures a warrant for his confinement, and with it the information that Mrs Vizard is in waiting outside, purposely detained by Sir Robert till he had warned her intended victim to escape, and that the agent whom he despatched for the purpose had found, instead of him, another poor little weeping captive. Mrs Vizard, admitted to an interview, is questioned about her fair prisoner,

and reveals that her name is Wilmot, and her father a Jacobite, and assures Walpole that the girl is no other than— what the acute reader, mindful of the hint given him in the first scene, may possibly guess her to be.

Walpole now holds all the threads in his own hands, and all the secrets—Blount's betrayal of his friend, Bellair's complicity in the escape of a State prisoner, and Lucy's parentage. How he avails himself of this knowledge to discover further the rivalry in love of the two politicians, and the state of Lucy's affections, and to deal out satisfactory and good-natured justice to all, it would be wronging the author and the reader to disclose. Suffice it to say that Walpole is justified in thinking that every man has his price, though not always in the mercenary sense to which he had narrowed the axiom, and that the politicians make no final difficulty about confirming Walpole in power by voting for the act that has given the British nation septennial parliaments. The old statesman in his interview with Lucy discovers a pretty vein of sentiment, which, though perhaps not strictly in accordance with his traditional demeanour to the fair sex, is undoubtedly better suited to the exigencies of the modern stage.

Deficient as such a sketch of the plot must be in those niceties of detail and various felicities which so gracefully mark the develop-

ment of the play, the reader who has followed it will not fail to perceive that the structure of the piece is singularly clear and ingenious. There are no odds and ends fluttering loose, no irritating passages leading to nothing, no run-away knocks at the reader's attention—all is smooth, compact, and, what is still better, natural and probable. The characters are well selected both for harmony and contrast—they suit the plot and the plot suits them—and both plot and characters grow with perfect propriety out of the epoch in which the scenes are laid. The difficulty of achieving this combined result will be conceded when it is considered how rare is success in this particular in the most popular comedies of the time, how much there is in their movement for the audience to excuse, and how equally foreign to nature and to art are many of the incidents and personages that most obtrusively demand the applause of the indulgent and the ignorant. These are not days when the vocation of the dramatic author or of the actor stands high; for though the encouragement given to modern dramas is lavish, it is lamentably indiscriminate; and the very tradition of such careful work as Lord Lytton's is almost lost to the stage.

The finish bestowed on the verse is commensurate for the most part with the elaborate completeness of the story, and if there are a few unmetrical lines such as—

“Wrong a widow!—there's oil to put in her cruse;”

or,

“Sure you cannot mean Blount, virtuous Selden Blount?”

Yes;”

and one or two slips of the pen, as—

“He found one poor *captive imprisoned* and weeping,”

such specks will be easily removed, and are scarce worth mention in the throng of excellences that crowd the work, of the execution of which

the quotations we have made furnish fair examples. The last line of the play,—

"Now I'm safe in my office, I'd leave well alone,"

is with singular propriety put in the mouth of a great Whig; for his successors have always, when safe in office, been careful to act on it, and commit themselves to important changes only when impelled by their hopes or their fears. We will only add, of this little volume, that its outside, pretty enough for the most fastidious boudoir, yet of excellent simplicity of taste, harmonises admirably with the graceful and thoughtful contents, and may well compete with the more pretentious progeny of Christmas.

Whether this play will be submitted to the experiment of representation we know not; but we should very much like to be present at its performance by a competent company, and should be quite content to see it judged on its merits, apart from the lustre of its authorship. In all the diversity of Lord Lytton's labours, there is one chap-

ter in literature to which he has never contributed,—that in which so many eminent writers have been so unlucky as to bear a part, and which is headed the *Jealousies of Authors*; for, however he may have unconsciously excited some of that envy which is almost inevitably felt by less successful aspirants for prosperous genius, he accords always to his brethren of the craft the most generous appreciation. If the audience of 'Walpole' were composed of those only who are his debtors for kind acts, kind words, and hearty judicious encouragement, the house would be filled to overflowing; and if the play were witnessed by all who have been delighted, times without number, by his feats in letters, it would have a run far beyond the most fortunate manager's experience.

THE OPENING OF THE SUEZ CANAL :

AS COMMUNICATED TO BULLION BALES, ESQ. OF MANCHESTER,
BY HIS FRIEND MR SCAMPER.

CAIRO, 25th November 1869.

MY DEAR BALES,—I take for certain that you are well informed of my doings up to the last embarkation; and concerning the voyage which succeeded that event, I have only to say that it was of the rough-and-tumble species, the very worst passage of this my grand tour. Its disagreeables—and it was exceedingly disagreeable—never for an instant occupied my mind, from the hour of its conclusion to this present writing; and I think, my friend, that when I relate the events which succeeded it, you too will lose all wish to hear about my sufferings, even though some of your awful predictions were verified thereby. It was on the morning of the 15th of November that our cruise ended. Soon after the dawn of that day I awoke from a troubled slumber; and after being violently jerked through the arc of a semicircle, to and fro, for some five minutes—she rolled grievously, she didn't pitch—I chose, as the less of two evils, to stagger out of my berth, and to tumble (literally) into a salt-water bath, deriving much comfort therefrom. Then I went through my toilette in the fashion which you have heard me graphically describe when I have related my astonishing adventures in Manchester over a sea-coal fire for the amusement and edification of—shall I say it, Bales!—the unenterprising! Pass that expression, and learn that, when I reached the deck, it was positively affirmed that, although the land was too low to be yet visible, I might see, if I chose to look, the masts of ships in the harbour of Port Saïd. I did look, and saw the masts of some seven ships, and the funnels of some of them. But one funnel

smokes, how then can the vessels be lying at anchor? “Oh yes, they are at anchor—the smoke is nothing.” But I see three of them smoking now; the ships are steaming along; and now, look to the right, there are three more; now to the left, there is another, and, farther off, a pair. Every minute reveals a new ship. They are going the same way as ourselves. We are converging on a common point, and that point is Port Saïd, invisible as yet. Breakfast-time came, but all refused to descend, looking pertinaciously for some material guarantee of the land's proximity. “There is a mast,” sung out somebody, “which does not taper, and has neither flag nor rope.” “Much you know about masts,” to him answered another salt of some ten days' experience. “You have probably got hold of a tall funnel through a foul glass; let me look.” “You be hanged!” replies the first jolly tar, wounded to his nautical centre. “Bet you three to one it isn't a funnel or a common mast.” “Done! the skipper shall settle it.” The skipper has had his glass on the object for a couple of minutes. He has no doubt: it is the lighthouse. “Of course, of course—of course it's the lighthouse,” we all say. How singular that such seasoned tars should have failed to recognise it! And, do you know, it really was the lighthouse, and we were told that we should be in harbour in three-quarters of an hour; and we went to breakfast, the roll (of the ship, not of breakfast) being now reduced to an arc of some eighty-five degrees. So, the meal being more comfortable than any for the last two days, a disposition is manifested to sit

and talk and speculate. This, however, is soon dissipated by the sounds of artillery, and up we go with one consent. We were too far off as yet to discover the cause of the firing, or to distinguish in front anything but a sea of masts, and flags, and floating smoke. To the right we discern the long mole, which is the western boundary of the harbour, like some huge cyclopean structure, extending a little behind us to the Mediterranean, and to the front, farther than the eye can follow it. On the other side, and not far before us, is the extremity of the eastern arm. Five minutes more and we are fairly in the artificial basin, almost stunned by the continued cannonade. "What can it be about?" "Oh! a salute to some great one, of course." "Tremendous noise! what will be the size of the guns?" "Nine-pounders, I should think; or, I don't know, they may be twenty - fours," says one who ought to have known better. They were hundred-and-twenty-pounders, at the least, crashing away, regardless of everything save the effort to make a noise. We could see now what is making the guns roar so, if there were but wind to blow away the smoke. Despite the smoke, we soon get an idea of the cause. The furious ship is flying the Austrian eagle at the main; at the fore and the peak is the crescent. The Turkish flag-ship is saluting the Emperor of Austria, who arrived an hour before us.* Her yards are manned, and, as we get a little clearer view, we see that the yards of fifty ships are similarly occupied — rows of sailors at different heights in the air. And now it is not one ship of war, but several at a time, that essay to imitate Jove's thunder, and an awful din they create. The clatter comes from all sides, and, as it seems to us, most wildly and irregularly. You no sooner change position to get a very little out of

the way of the last tormentor, when — bang! — under your nose almost, runs out a treacherous piece, and sends a rocket through your brain, making you almost leap from the deck. Men, as they were interrupted in their speech or stunned by a discharge, deprecated the shots in a forcible manly manner; and some fair ones on board of us unconsciously moralised, like Hotspur's friend, concerning the digging of villanous saltpetre. In truth, there was a vast expenditure of cartridges.

We began to swing in order to take up our berth, and in so doing opened the broadside of the Emperor's yacht, alongside of which two of the Khedivé's barges were waiting. Presently a crowd of plumes gathered on deck, and we saw the Viceroy descend the side and pull away, cheered by all the men on all the yards. Later on the Emperor boarded the Khedivé, and the scene was repeated.

As we came up the harbour and remarked the sailors of different nations in succession spread out upon the yards, we had our jokes at the fellows' style, and anticipated the satisfaction with which we should soon behold something of a first-rate character; but another and another was passed — Russian, Swede, Dane, Belgian, Prussian, and what not — and still no appearance of the genuine article. The British fleet was outside, and two of the ships, they told us, the Royal Oak and Prince Consort, were aground. Not pleasant this. Our statesmen have, no doubt, excellent reasons for the attitude Great Britain has assumed in regard to the Canal; nevertheless I say it would have gladdened mine eyes to come upon the mariners of England in this great gathering. In the afternoon I saw a union-jack at the masthead of a tiny steamer, overshadowed by tall masts and oceans of bunting. This obscure manifes-

* The Crown-Prince of Prussia had arrived before the Emperor.

tation denoted the presence of the British Admiral in his tender.

You are to bear in mind, as you read, that the firing never stops. It is sometimes continued by only one or two ships at a time, but it is the running accompaniment to the events of all this day. A Dane, quite close to us, and heavily armed, took especial pleasure in hearing himself talk, to our no small annoyance, for he lifted our steamer almost out of the water at every discharge. Noise and confusion are certainly a source of the sublime, though I do not remember that Burke has said so. If ears were confounded by the uproar, so were eyes by the infinite display of banners on ships and on shore. All along the moles that enclose the harbour, all along the shore, from the tops of all high buildings, from the masts and rigging of the ships, streams bunting, stamped with all colours and devices, and waved about by the softest of airs. The sea and sky are blue, the sun is bright, nature is aiding the endeavour of man to make this a holiday.

It took a long time to comprehend the scene on the water, which was in itself a complete pageant; but, having satisfied myself therewith, I landed with a party and began to explore the town, where everything was as lively and as brilliant as on the water. A large company was promenading the streets and wharves, but no special ceremony was enacted this day. Heat, sand, thirst—everybody in summer attire, umbrellas plentiful, men with puggarees and veils. We proceeded along the strand, facing which are buildings, most of them temporary, decked with flags and prepared for illumination. On the other side is a row of banners hooked on to upright poles, and flying from little staves at right angles to the uprights. These latter are surmounted by gilded crescents, and would be more imposing if they looked less like stable-forks; but the profusion of

gauzy banners streaming in the clear air has a fairy-like beauty. Seaward of the line of stable-forks are three gorgeous pavilions—the largest in the centre is rich with crimson and gold, and overshadowed by the flags and arms of all nations, grouped in divers colours, and seeming to denote universal brotherhood. Twice over I saw our striped acquaintance of the battle and the breeze mingling its folds affectionately with the flags of demonstrative foreigners, as if it were natural for a St George's and St Andrew's cross to hug and kiss in that outlandish fashion! Right and left of the centre were smaller pavilions—one crowned by a cross, the other by a crescent—both beautifully draped and ornamented: the object for which they were erected was explained later. We passed into the town, which, being irregular, and built without any architectural pretension, needs but slight description. Its rapid, almost magic growth, is its notable record.

To a person possessed with the supreme importance of the Canal, the most interesting sight in Port Saïd is the fountain of fresh water which fills a large circular basin in the Place de Lesseps, the great square. An Englishman must muse a little before he can understand the blessing that this precious circumference is to the inhabitants. Even in the drought of 1868, great Manchester endured little more than the apprehension of being restricted in the use of fresh water. The supply may have been shut off for an hour or two in the twenty-four, and possibly the dust of the city was not laid with the same lavish flow as at other times; but we never felt what it is to be straitened. But what must have been the condition of the living things in Port Saïd when their supply had to be conveyed to them by boat or camel from streams twenty or thirty miles distant? Think of their feelings when they

saw spring up through the parched soil a bubbling jet from the Nile's flood, forced from Ismailia to them through tubes by the power of steam, and brought to Ismailia by the fresh-water canal! The power of man's mind, penetrating and compelling the powers of nature, achieved this. Can it escape the mind of the European who beholds the work that he is standing but a short distance, comparatively, from the spot where a man's arm, animated by the power of God, smote the hard rock, and the waters flowed out? Surely science, heaping precept on precept, and line upon line, picking here a little and there a little, but surely if slowly advancing to grand results, is of kin to inspiration, whatever antagonism frail minds may imagine between them. It will be a great improvement when the population come to understand, not only the blessing of sufficient water, but how pure water ought to be treated. We shall not then see filthy Arabs who come to draw and to fill their skins, plunging their feet into the basin, and standing and walking therein. If the practice be thought to improve the water for domestic uses, the sooner that superstition follows the many which are being day by day surrendered by the Arabs, the better.

There being a regiment encamped outside the town, I went to look at the camp. They were in bell-tents pitched on the sands, and rather closely, without any apparent order. In rear were a few dozen horses picketed, some wearing artillery harness of villanously dirty and dilapidated appearance, and some without saddle or cloth, exhibiting their lean carcasses and ungroomed coats. While I looked, an officer of rank, probably the colonel of the regiment, with sleeves covered with lace, appeared, and had his horse brought up, grandly caparisoned. He left the camp in great state. The soldiers, I observed, carried their packs much as ours do. The

uniforms are gay, and generally blue.

Beyond the encampment, again, was an Arab village, where there was little to attract, but much squalor, and where the smells and sights were very disgusting. Returning, I looked into a mean building which served as a mosque. A few of the faithful, sprinkled over its area, were worshipping with their faces toward Mecca. The worship appeared to consist of prayer or praise with the arms extended, and prostrations with the forehead to the ground, alternately.

All the native women were veiled; but, as far as I saw at Port Said, the veils, which were black, covered only the lower part of the countenance below the eyes, being suspended from the head by a black band.

Finding not much more to see just now in the town, I turned back toward the landing-place, passing through the same motley crowd that I had before traversed. But an arrangement which certainly had been spoken of before, but in which no one seemed to believe, received just at this time a corroboration; for, looking through the open window of what appeared to be a restaurant, I perceived some of my fellow-voyagers refreshing and enjoying themselves with that air of ease and *abandon* which is so offensive to others who are hot and dusty and weary, and who nevertheless have come to no definite determination as to how they too will refresh and enjoy themselves. A friend, with a beaming countenance, and with pressing hospitality, held up a champagne-bottle to allure me to enter. He made me think of the modern Greek at Haidée's feast, who will occupy himself with no business, subscribe to no doctrine except that the capon on which he is engaged is fat, and that good wine ne'er washed down better fare. Jolly

dog! thought I. Kind, liberal, open-hearted fellow! The jollity and hospitality, however, turned out to be of a character which makes them easy of demonstration. The whole entertainment was at the Viceroy's expense. The guests were *all* the strangers who had come to witness the inauguration of the *fêtes*. Here let me add that at Ismaïlia as well as at Port Saïd public tables were provided for all visitors, and meals and wines supplied free of cost. Temporary buildings containing comfortable, though not very private, sleeping accommodation, had also been provided; and, among the vast crowd that assembled there, there must have been many right glad to use the kindly shelter.

An hour or two of daylight still remained, and presented an opportunity for looking round the new harbour. I was surprised to find how loosely the blocks which compose the moles had been put together. They have been thrown in in most admirable disorder, abutting as they may; and as they are all regular six-sided figures, this mode of huddling them together leads to a very loose and honeycombed wall. I had heard before I left home that the masonry was without cement, but I had imagined that the blocks were laid accurately with their beds horizontal and sides and ends vertical, so as to form an even structure. And why they were not so built I do not now understand. The form of the blocks would indicate that there had been an intention of laying them regularly. No doubt there is a reason, and a strong one too, to account for a mode of construction which entails many manifest disadvantages: as, for instance, that the many interstices allow of the passage of much fine mud into the harbour; that the wall is not only weaker as a whole, but that many of the blocks have been broken through the irregular bearings and their efforts to find adequate support; and that the appearance of this, a new work, is

that of a ruin. The blocks are huge masses of concrete, weighing upwards of twenty tons each, and all compounded at Port Saïd. A short view of the moles convinces one of the justice of Mr Hawkshaw's prediction, that these walls will have to be built over again before the Canal attains a great age. The section gives 80 feet as the width at base, 20 feet as the width at top, and the average height 35 to 40 feet. The western mole is nearly 3000 yards long, the eastern about 2000.

The appearance of the strand on which the eastern mole abuts furnished testimony to the amount of force which has been expended. It was literally covered with boilers, capstans, crabs, cranes, shackles, bolts, trucks, and engineers' apparatus—such a display as I never before saw. Two obelisks of wood at present mark the entrance to the Canal. They are of considerable height, and when decked for a festival, as I saw them, looked imposing. Their slight structure, however, would imply that they are not intended to remain. I pulled a little way into the passage and landed on the banks to look at Lake Menzaleh. The descriptions which I had read had given me, I found, a just idea of the scene. The banks which have been thrown up separate the Canal from a sandy wash sometimes, and sometimes from sheets of deep water or water that looks deep. Landward, that is southward, no firm land was to be seen. Only at Port Saïd and in its immediate neighbourhood, and along the banks of the Canal, did the dry land appear.

Returning now to my ship, I heard with gratification our National Anthem played on board the Viceroy's yacht. It was explained afterwards that this was done in compliment to some of our party who had been visiting there. Without at the time knowing or much caring for the cause, I was gratified to hear any recognition of England;

it was galling to see her of such small account. At night there was a most comprehensive reception on board the Khedivé's yacht. I did not attend it, because I did not feel attuned for gaiety; but I afterwards heard it described as very crowded and very sumptuous, the refreshments including smoking. There was no restriction as to dress. The fitting and furnishing of the yacht are magnificent. While I peacefully reposed on the deck in the light of the full moon and the warmth of the Egyptian climate, witnessing a sort of rehearsal of the grand illumination intended for tomorrow, I was better pleased to hear our neighbours on board the Danish man-of-war troll forth in strong concert a series of national airs, than I could then have been by any festive entertainment. All the day long had been working within me the consciousness that this was very Egypt, the realm of mystery and awe. By hearing sounds and seeing sights, and by constant motion, I had kept the sentiment down till dusk; but now, when the night fell, came a crowd of thoughts and recollections demanding entertainment. To lie down was not to sleep, though perchance to dream—to dream awake. With desire had I desired to behold this world-renowned region, possessing supreme claims on the mind, mingling with the first tiny shreds of knowledge, and related to all the knowledge that the mind can receive. What visions had I seen of it in infancy! How had I figured to myself the hole in the sand where Moses hid the Egyptian whom he had slain! How had I conjured up the scene when the sons of Jacob, looking one upon another, confessed that they were verily guilty concerning their brother! How had I read and wondered over Belzoni's travels, and the glimpses there given of the grand antiquities locked up in the sand and the deposit of the Nile, and waiting for the search of the enterprising! And as

I pondered on these things, there came up memories dormant for years and years—the form and furniture of a room, yea, the very pattern of a carpet showed themselves, and the echoes of voices long ago hushed in death, were heard once more distilling gentle lessons as when life was young, and I knew not how hard a world I had to face. It is impossible but that Egypt must command wider regards than any region on the earth. Countries there are, it is true, from whence have come arts, and philosophy, and the records of mighty thoughts and deeds, but these are objects of interest to only the educated. Egypt possesses the same attractions for the learned, and to this is added that every child which has been ever so slightly instructed in the lore of the religions of the civilised world, or which has acquired the first smatterings of profane knowledge, cannot fail to have a place in its mind for venerable Egypt. Hers is a soil to be trodden with measured footstep and bated breath, as by men who walk over the ashes of their kind. Much as I yearned toward her, I believed that I never should look on her. My way of life, though checkered enough by accident and travel, has led me hitherto to parts of the earth where my affections were not. At last a wish is realised; I note a bright spot in a wearying life. Weird country, House of bondage, Land of Egypt, I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee!

To me, my friend, nothing that man has written seems so fit to stir emotion as some of the Scriptural stories connected with this land from which I am writing. Often and often have I wept over them, and now that I am seared and worn, they can touch the springs of feeling as no other legends can. In Joseph making himself known to his brethren there is a terrible delight—a shaking of the nerves, a hardly endurable

satisfaction, such as no poetry, or drama, or tale beside can arouse. And again, the swoon of Jacob, when they said to him, "Thy son Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt,"—what a transporting picture do we not form from it! how one revives with him, and breathes again after the shock, and thinks it is as much one's own utterance as the patriarch's, "I will go down and see him before I die," for the speaker must be one with all who read his words! And sweetest, perhaps, of all are the words of aged Israel, spoken by him not as a prince of God, or as a prophet, but in simple thankfulness and unmeditated speech: "I did not think to see thy face, and, behold, God hath showed methyseed;" epitomising the whole charmed story, calling up the coat of many colours soaked in blood, the cruel bereavement, the restoration of Joseph from death, whence his father received him in a figure—Joseph's splendid destiny, and the blessed reunion. Well, it is past. I do not often indulge in reverie, Bales, so this lapse may be forgiven. The light is breaking through my cabin-window. Murmurs arise which grow to noises, and the noises to a din. The excited multitude is stirring again, impatient to press on the doings which are to precede the great trial of the Canal. I rouse myself, too. I can join as heartily as any here in the ceremonies and gaieties. I have wished for the success of M. de Lesseps' work, and I have never doubted that he would succeed. We shall see. The above is written as if I had expected to dress quietly, and then make my little programme for the day leisurely. I did expect something of the kind, but never was more deceived. Before my slippers were well on, a rattling, to which the rattling of yesterday seemed only mild and moderate, shook the sea and sky. Distant cheers are borne along on the wind. I guess what is the matter, wrestle

myself into some garments spasmodically, seize my glass, and rush on deck. All I can see is, that the men are out upon the yards as they were yesterday; all I can hear is the crashing discharges of all the cannon in the harbour as it seemed at once. The ships are berthed so close together, and so miscellaneous, that the noise and smoke must be as great as in a fleet-action. One inwardly prays that they will cease, if it be but for a moment, that one may speak to one's fellow, and ask or tell where the point of interest may be. There is an instant's lull at last, and cheers are heard, but still distant. The Empress is certainly coming, but where? Cheering again. Hah! the Viceroy enters his galley and puts off. Certes! he goes to meet Eugénie. More cheers, and nearer, yet where is she? What are those plaguy ships about changing their berths? Is it some late steamer dropping in, or are they making way for *L'Aigle*? It is a ship I see, for there she comes, that dark thing there with bare masts and black funnel out of keeping with the pageant. No! not bare; there is something or other fluttering against the mast, but it is half-way down. There it goes up again. Why, what does it mean? Mean! why, it must be the dip of a flag returning a salute; there is, then, some great personage on board, that is certain. Look well at the flag which is now at the masthead and flying out—tricolor—bees—the Imperial standard—it is *L'Aigle* and no other. That's luck, for her course is right across our bows. If the Empress be on deck we shall see her; but no, she is not, for there is a dense crowd amidships, and then there is an envious glass enclosure from which, no doubt, everything can be seen, but into which we see only through a glass darkly. Provoking, when the opportunity seemed so good, but we shall have other chances. *Speriamo*. At any rate we will

have a look at the outside passengers—the gay party under the canopy astern of the tantalising glass. There they are, not more than a dozen; splendidly dressed, and keeping well apart to indulge us; and that last figure, it seems as if one had seen it before. It draws near like a beautiful statue. Why—no—yes—impossible—but it is thought, and none other—the Imperial lady herself, majestic, beautiful, face to face with us at the distance of an arrow's flight! That her husband is not by her side is a circumstance that lends interest to her appearance as slowly and swanlike she floats by; while from the decks and riggings, and from the deepest hearts of men of all nations, come cheers after cheers, making the heavens ring. The shouts are first raised for the Empress; but all seem immediately to forget that they are hailing aught save a being gifted with the highest qualities of womanhood—gracious, gentle, and fashioned like a sculptor's dream. She passes on—God save her!—and *L'Aigle* takes her berth opposite us, but unfortunately she does not lie transversely; and, as she swings round, the firing is hushed for a while, and the air is pierced through and through from all points by the notes of "*Partant pour la Syrie.*" By the trident of Neptune it has been a glorious pageant!—such a one as is seen, perhaps, but once or twice in the life of an ordinary mortal, but which men tax their skill to imitate in pictures, and theatres, and sculptures, and to paint in words for the amusement of their fellows. *I* have seen the reality here, and am transported by my good fortune.

There occurred now, what from the poverty of language *I* must call a lull, meaning by that that there was not much passing that required one to be continually straining the eye. Visits were going on between the great personages, and the French ships had now to return all the

shots that had been fired during the morning. But they were the ships of one nation only, and could not maintain such a crashing as the ships of conspiring nations. Moreover, they were not very near us, and so *I* call it a lull; and the lull continued till afternoon, to the satisfaction, *I* should think, of everybody in the harbour.

Afternoon, however, brought its own *fête*, and there was everybody pushing for a sight again, *malgré* the rubs, and scrambles, and concussions they had already undergone. A ceremony was to be enacted on the shore, probably unlike any that has been witnessed on the earth. There was to be a religious inauguration of the Suez Canal, at which the crowned heads were all to assist. The novelty does not lie in this, but in the fact that of the crowned heads present two are Roman Catholics, one a Protestant, and the fourth a Mohammedan. The Cross and Crescent are both to overshadow worshippers who will prefer to Heaven a common prayer for the success of the work which has been accomplished, repudiating selfish policies, and pleading that their aim is peace, goodwill towards men. The pavilions which *I* had seen in my walk of yesterday are to be the scene of the rite; and thither will crowd great and small before three o'clock. *I* landed in due time in company with two friends, a gentleman from the north of England and his young fair daughter. We pass from the landing-place along causeways and under arches, till we are on the line of the expected procession, which is marked out by a flooring of loose planks over the sand. The notabilia of the road as distinguished from yesterday are, that the crowd is hurrying all one way, and that the sides of the route are flanked by troops in line. We got a position which seemed promising, and took some little pains to establish ourselves therein. This we effected, and as *I* found my elbows were against the sides of

two English baronets, I imagined that we had not chosen badly. There was some little objection on the part of the military to our standing where we did, but when they looked at the lady who belonged to our party, the gallant Mussulmans withdrew all opposition. There were two or three commands to stand back, which raised the hope that the procession was at hand, but these ended in nothing except murmurs. At last, after another command to stand close, there was manifestly a number of persons coming soberly along the boarded walk, like the head of a procession, with uniforms, and robes, and gay streamers. It was composed of different officials, military and civil, of many nations. Our consul-general and our admiral were among them. These passed onward and took their stations on the central platform. I was sorry to observe, just after they passed, that a naval officer (French, I think,) stumbled and fell: it was not clear whether from illness or from catching his foot. There was an interval, and then another batch of processionists—notabilities this time, though; for among them was the enviable De Lesseps himself, leading his charming *fiancée*. A proud man he must have been, and ought to have been, that day. And near him was Madame de Lesseps, his daughter-in-law, on the arm of what appeared to be a general officer, but turned out to be a literary gentleman of reputation, jammed into a red coat rich with decorations, and plumed like Mars—a sublime sight, or within a step of it! It has occurred to me that Mrs B. might not object to learn how the lady who is so soon to be Madame de Lesseps was habited on this great occasion; and, according to my ability, I proceed to describe her dress. She wore a short black silk dress, and a black hat, with two veils—the one next her face a grey gauze, outside that a spotted black. The group was tolerably large, but I had not time to observe

all its members; and so these passed on to the platform. And now at last the troops present arms, there are tall banners waving in the distance, and the sounds of military music—the sceptered guests this time, no doubt. They come on, preceded by some of the Khedivé's household—a cluster of great ones such as may not often be seen together. The Empress of the French, the Emperor of Austria, the Viceroy of Egypt, the Crown Prince of Prussia, and the Viceroy's young son. They are walking slowly, on a level with the crowd, and within distinct view of all beholders. The Empress leans on the arm of the Emperor of Austria. The cheers are hearty as they come along. She draws near. The Empress, the cynosure, smiling as only some ten women in the world can smile, winning hearts, applauded, worshipped; but she passed, and it was as if the sun had been eclipsed. A right worthy party they appeared, and I believe the salutations which met them this day were as genuine as they were numerous and loud. The suites of the different princes made up the procession, which had soon filed on to the centre platform. During the short interval before the commencement of the services, the naval officer whom I had seen fall was led away between two comrades, looking very weak and wan. I am afraid that he was struck by some disease, but I never heard more of him. A parenthesis here for Mrs B., whom I had forgotten in writing the above. The Empress wore a short pale-grey silk, with deep white Brussels lace arranged *en paniers* and flounces, as my fair companion explained to me. Her hat and veil were black, and there was a black velvet ribbon round her neck.

The Mohammedan pontiff who officiated on this occasion was understood to be a man of surpassing sanctity, who had come from a great distance. He was old, and his voice feeble, so that his utterances were not very distinctly heard,

—a circumstance which, to the European part of the audience, could not have been of much importance, as he, of course, spoke in Arabic. Whether it may have been a prayer or an exhortation which he gave voice to, it was but short. And then followed prayers on the Roman Catholic side of the platform. But the event of the meeting was yet to come—namely, an address by M. Bauer, her Majesty's confessor, commencing, "*Monseigneur, Madame, Sir,*"—Monseigneur indicating, as I understood, the Viceroy. It is hardly a disparagement to say that this oration contained no new information or idea. It was impossible that a subject which had been so long and so generally discussed could be put into an entirely new light for this public day. But it is, I think, a fair objection to the speech that, being of necessity composed of somewhat trite matter, it was couched in grandiloquent phrases. Familiar ideas do not admit of being dressed in high-sounding words. I shall be curious to see whether, when the discourse is published in the papers, as it will be, the judgment which I have formed of it will be supported by the critics. The orator magnified the work now achieved as one of the grandest which history can record, and dilated on the benefits derivable from it both to the present and the future. He thought that the day of creation and the 16th day of November 1869, would both figure in the chronology of the future in ineffaceable characters. Then he proceeded: "*Il y a deux mondes unis dans un seul. Le splendide orient et l'occident merveilleux se rapprochent, se saluent: salut! splendide orient d'où nous viennent à la fois la lumière du soleil et celle de l'intelligence. Et toi aussi salut! occident qui as recueilli cette lumière et en as fait le patrimoine commun de tous. C'est aujourd'hui la grande fête de l'humanité tout entière!*" The Canal, which seems only a means

of increasing wealth, is nevertheless to be the great river which of two worlds shall make a single world, and of all the races of the earth a single humanity. Manners, language, customs, are all to be assimilated. "*Il n'y aura plus qu'un unique fairceau, l'humanité.*" These are very fine words, and very grand promises, but are they not rather lavish? Our friend over the water will not be long before he endeavours to emulate this work, or rather to overwhelm and stamp it out of notice, by the splendid piercing of the Isthmus of Darien. But what will be the use of opening the second isthmus if the opening of the first has already fused the nations into "*une seule humanité,*" and produced a millennium? Fortunately the gentlemen who are expected to promote the junction of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans are not of a race likely to be outdone in tall talk; and as they once discovered an oyster so big that it required two men to swallow it whole, so they may represent *l'humanité* as grown to such perfection that it requires two canals to maintain it *seule*.

M. Bauer, with better taste than distinguishes the greater part of his address, complimented the Viceroy on the success of the undertaking. "*Ce que vous avez sagement voulu,*" he said, "*vous avez courageusement accompli. Jouissez aujourd'hui de votre glorieux succès!*" but he immediately after relapsed into bombast. I cannot, however, find much fault with the few words which he addressed particularly to the Empress Eugénie. "*Madame, et ce n'est pas en une parole banale, l'histoire dira tout ce que cette œuvre merveilleuse doit à vos chaudes sympathies. Ici encore, votre cœur a battu à l'unison de celui de la France!*" Neither do I wish one word omitted from the apostrophe which he made to the great author of the work, and I joined heartily in the cheer which attended the conclusion of it:

"Tout ce qui constitue le puissant initiateur, en est fait la plus grande gloire du dix-neuvième siècle. Ainsi il est un nom que nous pouvons sans désavantage opposer à celui de Christophe Colomb, c'est celui de FERDINAND DE LESSEPS." (Bravo ! bravo !)

In awarding to the Emperor of Austria his share of the compliments, M. Bauer said that the Adriatic Sea made now only one river with the Indian Ocean. The meaning of this flourish is not quite clear, but the expression struck me and many of my friends with whom I have talked the matter over as being in questionable taste. An appeal to Heaven, quite worthy to be inscribed with the rest of the oration, ended it.

After the ceremony the illustrious actors in it returned in the same order in which they had come to the wharf, and thence on board their respective ships under the indispensable salutes of cannon. I strolled about Port Saïd, looking into some of the shops, which seemed very fairly supplied. There was no public entertainment this night, if that expression be applicable when so many thousands were being entertained at the Viceroy's expense, and when an illumination was being prepared which should delight all eyes ashore or afloat. I mean that invitations for a dinner, ball, or other party were not issued by the Viceroy, and it was understood that sovereigns and princes would spend the evening as each should please, and prepare for the passage of the Canal to-morrow.

The early part of the evening was passed on board in discussing once more the probabilities of the passage to-morrow, and the arrangements made in that respect. Sinister rumours were afloat concerning the grounding of a Turkish steamer in the Canal, on which the prophets of evil began to croak hoarsely. I own that I was surprised to find how little faith there was even now in the sufficiency of the work. As

the Israelites imputed to Moses that he had brought them out of Egypt to perish in the wilderness, so did they of little faith affirm that M. de Lesseps had decoyed us all from our hearths and altars to witness a miserable failure. We should see. We might go into the Canal, but our ship would have to be dug out of it, and we, landed in the wilderness, might find our way to the coast as best we could. The ladies, bless them ! showed less distrust than the gentlemen, and argued against the probability of a work which, through so many difficulties and dangers, had been brought triumphantly to this point, being allowed to come to nought at this supreme moment. And so, in cheerful predictions and dining, we whiled away the hours till the illuminations should commence.

If M. de Lesseps was to lie open to our reproach for seducing us from our homes to be disappointed in respect of the Canal, he at any rate deserved credit for bringing us to a better climate than our own. I could imagine what an English evening would be like on the 16th of November — very unlike the heavenly nightfall in which we took to our boats to behold the illuminations and fireworks. The temperature was simply delicious ; hardly a ripple was on the water, and the moon, at the full, was riding in the heavens. We pulled out into the small open passage left after accommodating so many ships, and looked down the rows of shipping to right and left. All were ablaze with lamps, some variegated, others of uniform colour. In some of them every inch of the rigging was studded with these gay fires, and in all there was a profuse display. Near to you the glare quite dazzled, but the lights mellowed with distance : three or four ships off they were in lines and streaks ; farther on they exhibited confused figures ; and at last they stretched away into what seemed infinity — an endless rosy cloud. One ship of war, which had

the appearance of lying across the harbour, came out especially strong in illumination, and the Viceroy's yacht was most tastefully and profusely lighted, rigging and hull too. To form an idea of all this, you must consider the large area over which the fires extended. Look which way you might, your eye could not find a sombre spot; the heavens seemed on fire, and the calm depths on which we floated, reflecting all the glories, multiplied indefinitely the brilliant figures. Before we could take in the whole effects, rockets began to rise from different quarters at once, and these continued to be discharged during the whole evening, the stars of some of them being most artistically and beautifully contrived. Besides these, there were all sorts of fiery projectiles, which, little by little, joined in the general conflagration; and at last, on the strand, were exhibited all manner of *feux d'artifice*, the most elaborate appearing near to one of the obelisks which I mentioned as marking the entrance to the Canal. Along this strand burned coloured lamps. It was, indeed, a fairy scene, and to pull about the harbour and enjoy it seemed the height of pleasure. Our wayward nature, however, will have change; and, leaving the delights on the water, we pulled to shore to see how it fared with the town. There, too, all was light. Torches glared, legends of light were visible, Chinese lanterns gleamed high and low, and of all colours. It was like taking a walk through the zodiac. I never saw such a glitter of artificial light as on this night. The murmuring of many voices, and the shooting of the projectiles, were the only sounds that broke the stillness—a delightful contrast to the banging and rattling that had been going on all day. I do not know what Port Saïd may be in its working clothes, but in its holiday dress I bear testimony to its being a most enchanting place.

The arrangements for commencing

the passage of the Canal next day were not issued till late on the 16th, and some inconvenience ensued. The order of proceeding was not strictly observed. There was intelligence of the ship that had grounded in the Canal being off the bank; but still the doubters were dissatisfied, and went to bed with doleful hearts. It was a comfort to learn this evening that the two English ships had been got off the mud outside.

The morning of the 17th began with firing, like the preceding two days. As I knew what the firing meant, I did not suffer myself to be startled out of my cabin, as I had done the day before, but dressed leisurely, judging from the sounds without what was going on. The ships of war had been directed to enter first, and there were to be intervals of a quarter of an hour each between every two ships. When, therefore, after the first cannonading I heard our Danish neighbour playing "*Partant pour la Syrie*," I knew that *L'Aigle* was entering the canal. More firing, and the Hymn to the Emperor, showed that the Austrian imperial yacht had gone in, and so on. Our national anthem was being played as I came out to view the scene, and Sir A. Milne, in his tender, was just passing between the obelisks. After seeing the first few begin the passage, and watching their masts as long as we could see them, we went to breakfast. The news at table was that, by incredible exertions continued all night, the obstructing ship had been removed, but still heads were shaken and predictions hazarded against a successful passage. For my part, I was not in the least surprised to hear that a ship had touched in the Canal, or that they had got her off. The smallest error in steering must put a long ship on the bank; but the officers of the Canal were no doubt prepared for accidents of the kind, and no doubt they took care that everything should be clear on this

eventful morning. I was so far from thinking worse of the Canal because a ship had taken the ground that I rather rejoiced in the accident, as it gave an opportunity of showing how readily it could be dealt with.

It was afternoon before we in our turn steamed into the jaws of the Canal. We were about in the middle of the procession, so that it must have been evening before the last ship entered. The orders were to proceed at the rate of five miles an hour, and to maintain the initial distance between the ships. Of course the transmission of instructions from either end of the flotilla to the other by signals was easy. It was delightful to reflect that we were actually in the much-canvassed water, and then to feel that our ship, which did not then draw much over twelve feet, sped along as easily as if she had been at sea. The water about us looked somewhat disturbed, as if the preceding ships, either by actual contact with the ground, or by the wash on the sides of the Canal which their passage occasioned, had troubled the waters; but we went along. When we first slackened speed, in order to keep the required pace, the ship which followed us showed a disposition to run up and attempt to pass—an attempt which was of course thwarted. I mention it to show that there were irregularities committed in endeavours to get forward places, which might have led to blocks and difficulties, and which were extremely inconsiderate at a time when the object of every ship admitted should have been to make a fair trial of the capabilities of the passage. We sounded continually. The lead was hove by Italian, not English, sailors, but I was assured that they were finding on this first day never less than 23 English feet of water, and sometimes as many as 30 feet. I am afraid, however, that we did not test the very shallowest parts, or that there was some mistake in the

reduction of the soundings to English measure. However, those before us were advancing, great and small; the greatest draught being 18 or 19 feet—that of the *Peluse*, a French ship.

Only a dreary expanse of shoal-water and inundation is visible from the northern end of the Canal. Lake Menzaleh, which in these latter days has been more a swamp than a lake, is extensive and unvaried. The Canal has been driven through it by dredging, and the Canal's banks are the only pieces of continuous hard ground that traverse its waters. On these are a few huts and stations for the workmen whom we saw at work on the finishing processes. Some were driving piles for warps, some completing the banks and slopes, or excavating small basins at the sides, and all working hard apparently. Donkeys, mules, and camels were carrying on their backs the earth that had to be moved, and the groups presented a picturesque scene to the artist, if rather a primitive one to the engineer. I have in my lifetime done some pieces of work by negro-labour, Bales, and can form some idea of the difficulty of pushing forward such a labour as this by means of Egyptians and Arabs, obstinately wedded to old thriftless ways, and persistently wasting the labour of their hands by rejecting method and order. The dredging-machinery and the plant used in making the Canal had been got out of sight somehow or other, and I was astonished that I saw so few evidences of work which, I heard, was kept briskly going up to the 15th or 16th.

Our amusement was to watch the small steamers, some of them passage-boats, and some belonging to the works, which frequently went up and down, using greater speed than we could dare to put on, and to return heartily their hearty salutations. We noted, too, the enormous flights of wild-fowl on the lake, and saw now and then the

ibis at home. It was a relief to the eye when, towards evening, some high ground and an extent of dry land, the famed Wilderness of Zin, I suppose, were discernible. The hillsides were distinctly stratified, and there was just enough undulation in the plain to assist the light and air in making a glorious prospect. The sun was sinking, and the air, gently simmering through some agency of the climate, received the rich purple light which overspreads with its warmth all the views that I have seen in the land of Egypt. We knew that we saw a desert, yet it looked an Eden; the foregrounds lovely in rich light and shadow, and the distances shewing a mirage of rocks and mountains and cities, all glowing in a soft and many-coloured light. But as the sun approached the horizon the purples dissolved into all the colours of the rainbow, red and yellow ruling in the sky—a prodigality of colour, an enchanted scene. And gliding along on an even keel, we sat in silence in the genial evening watching the dying beauty of the day, which did not die, for there was no obscurity, no damp of night, no eclipse of beauty. Before the sun was down the moon was up, and her silver stole timidly over the lone region, as if deprecating rivalry with the great light which had just sunk in surpassing glory. But she rose in heaven with a glory all her own, touching the waters with her sheen, and bathing the desert in amber beams. Long sharp shadows from the rigging fell on the elsewhere illuminated deck; the Egyptian night was calm and without a cloud; and I listened to a voice, soft, gentle, and low, an excellent thing in woman, extolling the tranquil scene, and giving token how truly nature's loveliness had touched an ingenuous soul. This was enjoyment, but it was not destined to endure. There is a hoarse screaming whistle from the steamer in front of us; she stops, we stop. "What the devil is the matter?"

issues from some dozen throats at once. Nobody replies, for nobody knows. "There it is! I knew it!" sings out every croaker. "It's all up; we shall have to scramble ashore, and walk to Ismailia; pleasant fix!" And then followed a rumour derived none could say whence, which affirmed that the ships in front were all aground, and our chance of passing completely hopeless. Some were for going at once on shore and seeking camels to take them and their baggage on; some, a little more rational, advised the postponement of the step till morning; but the counsel which, backed by the ladies as before, ultimately prevailed, was to pull ahead in the boats and endeavour to ascertain the real state of the case. As I entertained apprehension of nothing worse than a short delay, I did not go in the boats, but watched their course, as far as I could see it, from the fore-castle. It was not very long before they returned without any certain information, but with their fears strengthened, and bidding us to expect the worst. Again it was proclaimed a "precious mess," and again proposals were made to go on shore and seek conveyances; but before the hubbub and fretting had been succeeded by action, some important intelligence had arrived. One of the party, determined to find out how things were, had landed from the boats, and trudged along the bank till he reached ships far before our own. He was now seen returning tired and slowly through the heavy sand. While we were lowering a boat to take him off, he informed us at the top of his voice that there was nothing at all the matter; but that orders had been sent from Ismailia, where the leading ships already were, for no more ships to enter the harbour that night, but to anchor in the Canal till morning. Thus this alarm, too, ended, and we now waited patiently for the day.

Early on the 18th we emerged

from the Canal and entered the waters of Lake Timseh, which may now be called the harbour of Ismailia, and a splendid basin it is. On the north-west shore is the new town, which now was gleaming with as many colours as Port Saïd was the day before. The ships in harbour, too, were in holiday trim. We advanced and took up our appointed berth, having now penetrated without accident some fifty miles from the Mediterranean into Egypt. Ismailia viewed from the water is a pleasant sight. The palace built for the reception of the illustrious guests of to-day is what first arrests the eye. Large as it is, you are told that it was built in three months, which would be a very marvellous circumstance if the growth of the whole town had not been rapid in proportion. The ships are not so numerous nor so closely packed as they were in Port Saïd; and when the men-of-war begin to fire, as they soon do, they are more tolerable than the huge dark masses which were vomiting their fire almost into each other's sides on the 16th. And, apropos of that, I observed a curious performance connected with the firing of heavy guns from some of the foreign ships. The guns were never run in to load, but immediately after each discharge a head was thrust through the port-hole, and a sailor, with a sponge in his hand, took his seat astride on the muzzle of the gun. From this position he sponged and rammed. I need not add that, in real warfare, a man so exposing himself must be slain by a rifle-bullet immediately.

It was the landing of the Empress of the French which gave occasion for the firing which I have mentioned; and the firing is followed by deafening shouts from the shore as she takes her way to the palace which has sprung up as rapidly almost as did Aladdin's. She is

to inspect the wonders of the new town and to witness the horsemanship of Arab chiefs for a morning's entertainment, and at night she is to grace a grand ball at the palace. Here let me relate an anecdote. On board the same ship with myself was an Italian gentleman of middle age, clever, spirited, quaint, reckless, pleasant. I sometimes thought he was Italian by mistake, and intended for an Irishman, for which character he had the further qualification of being somewhat out at elbows. He had been *capitaine*, exile, wanderer, writer; had worked his passage home from Australia in an English ship; spoke four languages well, smoked twenty cigars a-day; had had several duels, and had like to have slain one; and knew a short road to a lady's heart. (I know a pair of bright eyes that would look severely on this last expression if they could see it; but *flat justitia*, you know, Bales, I must be honest.) He had got an invitation from the Viceroy to attend the *fêtes* in some capacity or other, and he had made himself a favourite with all on board. This hero happened to be on shore at the moment when the Empress was about to mount a camel, probably for the first time in her life. The richly-caparisoned animal was on its knees and haunches to receive its fair burden, and Eugénie, sitting well forward of the hump, was about to order that the animal should rise, when the Italian, who knew something about camels, as he did about most things, taking his cigar from his mouth, called out to her, "*Tenez-vous en arrière, ou vous ferez la culbute!*"* This is not the style in which imperial personages are generally addressed, but the gracious lady with real dignity accepted the honest advice. She bowed kindly, saying, "*Je vous remercie, monsieur;*" and immediately altered her position. The camel, in rising, lengthens its

* Hold yourself back, or you will turn a somersault.

hind legs first. And while I am digressing, let me introduce a message for madame. The Empress, when on the camel, wore a yellow alpaca dress and jacket of the same, a large Leghorn hat, and a yellow veil.

I landed before noon at one end of the town, and found myself on a strand of deep loose sand, crowded with Mussulmans and cattle, and showing a few temporary houses, with many sheds and tents. There is now something like a native population to be seen. At Port Saïd there were so many strangers of all nations, that the town seemed to belong no more to the Egyptians than it did to the Germans or the English. Now, however, the predominance of the turban and the fez showed clearly who were at home and who were not. Before I was off the beach I saw a sight which proved how different from those of Europe are the modes that prevail here. One of the faithful who was moving some wood incurred the wrath of his employer, a fat Mohammedan, who let into him with a pole a yard and a half long, and about the thickness of a man's arm, belabouring him unmercifully, falling into the most violent rage, and venting his wrath in words as well as blows. What with the dress and the exaggerated action, the incident was so like what one sees in a pantomime, that I could not refrain from laughing, though it was certainly no joke to the poor *fella*.

A very few steps in from the seabeach you come upon the freshwater canal which flows through the town. The part which I saw looked muddy, and one could guess why; for there were savages standing in it, and cattle brought to drink were allowed to go into it too. Through nasty sheds, very nasty animals, and particularly nasty people, I had to pass about a hundred yards along the banks, encountering terrible odours before I reached a bridge which allowed

me to cross to the more respectable part of the town. Here was a fair broad street, with a hard road (the other ways were all loose sand), and along this I passed, observing the houses on either side, some of which were very good. Most of them were detached, and stood among trees, shrubs, or flowers, so that this town in the desert has rather a pleasing appearance. Some way on towards the palace there was a square, with hotels and baths in it, and on one side thereof were donkeys for hire—the only public conveyance. It was broiling hot, and I did not fancy walking on the sand. On the other hand, I was somewhat squeamish about exhibiting myself on the outside of a donkey, and there was a conflict of emotions. Exhausted nature prevailed over pride, and I approached a donkey-proprietor, making signs that I wished to know the price per hour. He understood me perfectly, and said, "Ten shilling—hour." I was convinced that he must use the word *shilling* for some other coin, and, having compassion upon his ignorance, took some pains to satisfy him of his error. But he was quite intelligent and wide awake. "Half-suvvern," he said; "muss pay; all donkey wanted." He was fixed as *kismet*, utterly immovable, but a rogue who had overshot his mark. A reasonable advance of price must have been, of necessity, submitted to on the occasion; but this rascal's assurance defeated its object, and I was glad, later in the day, to see his animals standing apparently fresh and unnoticed. I made a push now for the palace, in viewing which I expected at any rate a solid footing instead of the sand, and shelter from the sun; but when I got there I was informed that visitors were not admitted, as preparations for the ball at night were in progress. Foiled here, I and some friends whom I had joined, looked at the outside of the building, which is plain, but lofty

and extensive. (The inside I saw at a later hour.) It has a plantation of palm-trees round it, and is separated by a low wall from the road. Afterwards, attracted by a green grove just beyond, we entered an enclosure, and were most politely received by M. Pierre, the manager of the fresh-water works, whose domain this was. He was good enough to take us over his garden, where, by sluices, jets, and artificial rain drawn from the Nile, he has contrived to raise vegetables innumerable, and to surround his house with elegant plants and flowers. Splendid creepers, convolvuluses, the magnificent poinsettia, oleanders, and I know not what other gay blossoms mingling with rich green leaves, shaded walks, and pavilions overrun with climbing plants, and with the moisture dripping all round them, hardly suffered the mind to realise what this spot was some six years since—the very heart of an African wilderness. We were also gratified by the sight of a pond absolutely full of the celebrated lotus-plant, whose large leaves nearly hid all the water. The fruit, dark in colour, is shaped like a saucer with a cover on it (I do not know how better to describe it), and it is pierced with numerous holes, or rather tubes, visible in the upper surface, and descending through the fruit to the lower. The diameter is three inches, or thereabouts. In a word, it much resembles the rose of a watering-pot. Having shown us his pretty fresh grounds, and presented us with fruit and flowers, M. Pierre added to his favours by showing us the engines and wheels by which the water is sent over Ismailia, and to Port Saïd and the stations on the northern half of the Canal. The engines are of fifty-horse power, and they send 400,000 gallons per diem to Port Saïd. The price of the water, both at Ismailia and Port Saïd, is 1 franc for 100 gallons, the cost of 100 gallons to the company being 20 centimes. The works

cost £280,000 sterling. We had now to thank M. Pierre for the large portion of his time which on this busy day he had devoted to our entertainment, and to take our leave. Let me add, that on every occasion where I had to apply to an Egyptian official I found in him the utmost patience and politeness, and a hearty desire to serve. A great many of them speak English well. M. Pierre, before parting, told us that he believed every one of these donkey rascals was well paid for this occasion by the Viceroy, and in strict justice could demand no pay at all. He advised that we should take the donkeys, and at the end of the ride give whatever hire we thought proper.

Refreshed by our stay at the water-works, we now strolled back through the main street, where we looked at the governor's house, and saw M. de Lesseps ride up to and enter it. We found out, too, the offices of the different consuls, and those of some of the Egyptian ministers; and, heat and fatigue compelling again, I was fain to get a donkey, and a lady of the party having consented to ride a donkey also, we continued our promenade. The railway station and another Arab encampment were visited in this way and then we went, the whole party, to lunch with the Viceroy—that is to say, we entered an immense pavilion, and called for whatever refreshment we required, gratis! In exploring further, my donkey came upon a street lined by soldiers, and we found out, with some little trouble, that the Empress was likely to pass that way on a drive round the town. Waiting to watch what would happen, we were surprised to see our Italian friend, and self-constituted posture-master to the Empress, coming along post-haste in an open carriage. He charged without ceremony through the troops, who quickly made way for him, and, espying us, invited four to make use of the carriage, three inside and

one on the box, the carriage having been furnished, as so many other things were, by the Viceroy. Driving back through the lines of troops, we were soon aware of some carriages approaching the contrary way, and, drawing to one side, we were once more gratified by a sight of the crowned heads and princes, whom we followed, and, as they returned, passed yet once more. Just after we saw them first our *capitano's* cigar went out, and he reilluminated it by the strangest means I ever saw used for such a purpose. He bade a soldier on duty in the ranks to hand him the weed of some person in the rear; and this the soldier did without any remark, returning it again to the owner when the *capitano's* was alight.

We went to see the Arab tournament, or whatever they may call it, but I cannot say that I derived much amusement or instruction therefrom. The chiefs were all independent, and had come in with certain of their tribes to do voluntary honour to the Empress and Khedivé. They were enveloped in their long white shaggy mantles and hoods, and with their gaily-caparisoned horses were, I suppose, much to be admired. They rode short, as we know that the Arabs do, and dashed their horses up and down the lists without rule or reason that I could discover, frequently firing, but oftener presenting without firing, while their horses were in career. I was altogether disappointed in the speed with which they passed. Had they galloped like the wind, as we read of Arabs doing, the facility with which they used their weapons would have demanded admiration; but whether they were checked by the sand, or whether their speed is exaggerated, the exploits did not seem at all beyond the achievements of an English dragoon or good rider to hounds. After the rifle-exercise we had some tilting with lances. These weapons, which are set on bamboo poles, can be

either thrust or hurled at an enemy. I have in this case also to make the observation that the moderate pace, as compared with my expectation, at which the feats were performed, made them subjects of neither wonder nor interest.

Tired and heated though I was, I in the evening landed again to go to the Khedivé's ball. The streets were illuminated as at Port Saïd. We had some trouble in finding a carriage (all the carriages were engaged by the Khedivé), but we did get one, and drove through the many thousand lights to the palace. All the palms surrounding the building were thickly hung with Chinese lanterns, creating a most beautiful effect. The first step into the building showed what sort of an attendance there was. The very vestibule was crammed. We did, however, manage to cross that, but when we attempted to get tickets for our wraps, the crush was dreadful. There was no thoroughfare past the bureau, but each person had to advance through a narrow gorge to the window and then to get back again, the fight between comers and goers being most vigorous. About eight or ten rooms were open, but they were all filled to suffocation. The ladies who were lucky had seats all round the walls, and the remaining ladies with the gentlemen covered every inch of the area of each room. The number of the company was estimated at 6000, and it was by no means select. Very odd-looking Europeans were there in all kinds of dresses (except working dresses, which I did not see) and some with countenances of a somewhat villainous cast. The Moslem attendance must have been also very mixed; for although Arab gravity did not allow much to be divined from the countenance, the dress, and the peculiar flavour of many of the true believers bespoke slight acquaintance with the ways or the water of the *beau monde*. It was not surprising, therefore, to

hear next morning of ladies having lost their watches or ornaments ; nor to be told by a gentleman whom I accompanied, that in one of the rooms he felt a hand carefully examining his pockets at a time when he was so crushed that it was impossible to turn. I was aware that in the situation which he indicated, a person in eccentric costume and with a face not benevolent had persistently interposed between us. That person was, however, in the higher walk of his profession, and did not stoop to folly for folly's sake ; for, finding only a spectacle-case in my companion's pocket, he refrained from abstracting that useful article. And, after all, one must not complain very grievously if, where hospitality was so extended, a few social difficulties found their way, but rather admire the zeal and courage with which they pursued their calling ; for had any of them been complained of, they had little to hope for from laws made expressly for their protection, or from the pig-headedness of an enlightened jury, but it is possible that Ismail would have summarily extinguished ingenuity and life together.

In one of the largest rooms of the suite were to be seen M. de Lesseps and his party. He appeared to be in the highest spirits, and was receiving the felicitations of his friends, as the latter could make their way to him through the crowd. Any one who had the patience and energy to accomplish the middle passage through the crowd could see that night every celebrity that was in Ismaïlia, and had a chance of encountering friends of whose presence there he had no suspicion. I saw two English officers, colonels of the same corps, gravitate towards each other from a distance at which only the uniform could be recognised ; and when they at length met near me I heard the surprise expressed by each at the unexpected meeting. Ministers of State, military and naval

officers of all grades, civil officials in their decorations, Jews, Greeks, Turks, Moors, Albanians, Egyptians, and one Hungarian noble, in their national costumes, mingling with the crowd of black frocks and swallow-tails, made up a most gay and picturesque multitude, the parts of which, after at first working independently, and resisting, and withstanding, and counteracting each other to the utmost, found the advantage of arranging themselves into currents, after which the eddies and narrows were the only very dangerous places. Wherever it was possible to see the carpets, strips of ribbon, lace, tulle, ruchings, puffs, streamers of tarlatan, flounces, and whole parterres of crushed flowers, were there in ruins ; and towards morning, when the crowd thinned, some of the hapless owners might be seen flitting to and fro, bare and dishevelled, clasping the dear remains.

The furniture of the rooms, when a piece could be viewed, was seen to be very splendid, and of the newest fashion ; but any comprehension of the general effect was manifestly out of the question. The scarlet liveries of the Khedivé's innumerable domestics, who were laced and powdered to the utmost capabilities of their persons, increased the variety of colours, as the persevering wearers endeavoured to make their devious way through the mass to offer ices and other refreshments to faint beings who, after grasping the coveted glass or saucer, found they could not raise their hands to their mouths.

The spacious supper-pavilion was not, however, crammed with human beings wedged together as were the other rooms. It was spread with many long tables for the supper, and cross-tables at one end were loaded with ices, fruits, wines, orgeat, sherbets, cates, and every delicacy that could be readily discussed without much ceremony. The less dainty of the guests, es-

pecially the Egyptians, had a rapid way of dealing with these viands, and of disposing of peels, stones, stems, &c., which were not the only offerings which they made to the floor. Even the true believers yield to the potent influence of the times. Who does not remember how secret that old rascal Sheik Ibrahim had to be in indulging his fancy for wine with Nouredin, and how he trembled at the thought of the Caliph discovering his horrid infirmity! And now, here, in the palace of the ruler of a Mohammedan country, were wines and strong drinks not only permitted, but temptingly offered to the palates of all comers!

It was near midnight when the Khedivé and his greatest guests entered the first of the suite of rooms and began to move slowly round it. Their appearance only caused the crowd to wedge themselves more closely into blocks. Only a very few of the front ranks were gratified by a sight of them, and, after a short progress through the company, the high personages retired to a reserved apartment. After this were begun what were called dances—exercises by which I trust that the actors were delighted, though I own to an inability to understand the pleasure.

This was the last public appearance of the Empress Eugenie during the *fêtes*. About one in the morning she was conducted into the same spacious pavilion where the general company supped; but one end of the room—i.e., the end opposite to that where I have said that the refreshments were—had been cunningly screened by a wall of high plants, and the most distinguished guests sat within the

fence. To say that Eugenie the Empress was here seen in a new situation, is to say that she was revealing new fascinations—no longer answering the greetings of a crowd, but conversing freely with princes, animated, and evidently pleased with the entertainment. It is impossible to overrate the influence of this gracious lady's presence on the character of the *fêtes*. The occasion itself, great though it was, the Khedivé's profusion, M. Bauer's grandiloquence, could never have given them their romance had not Eugenie been there. She it was who raised the spirit of chivalry in the gathering, subdued the strifes and emulations and intrigues of men, and over commerce, science, avarice, spread the gauzy hues of poetry.

We were all satisfied now, and retreated to our boats which waited duly at the wharf. The deep calm and stillness of the water contrasted with the lights and sounds of revelry on shore. As we pulled to the ship in the soft moonlight, "*Partant pour la Syrie*" first, and then the Hymn told of the different departures and embarkations.

I must pause now, Bales, but I have more to tell. I am fascinated by old Egypt, and long to make you share my satisfaction. It is an enchanted country, inexhaustible in its charms—Copt, Jew, and Arab, each a study and a mystery, all being actors in its wondrous history. The very light of heaven falls on it as on no other land that I have seen, and makes life here a gilded vision. My enjoyment will be short, but so far it is real and thorough.—Yours, Bales, from the Banks of the Nile,

SCAMPER.

(To be continued.)

MR FROUDE AND QUEEN MARY.

It is not our intention at the present moment to enter upon any discussion of the great work which Mr Froude has just completed. There can be no doubt, whether we agree with his conclusions or not, that he has spared no pains to give the fullest picture possible of one of the most important eras of modern history. He has thrown himself into the time, with all its unlikeness to our own, and, so far as that is possible to a man trained in the modern school of thought, has laboured to judge it by its own standards, and to set before us, unbiassed by consciousness of the results, a clear view of its tendencies, and the elements of a new national existence which had there their origin. It is only in one case that he can be accused of sacrificing anything to dramatic effect, and even here his sin is one which concerns not fact but feeling. The picture which Mr Froude has undertaken to paint is one which is very distinct, and, we might say, unique in history. His subject has all the importance of a grand national crisis, in which the strongest influences which affect humanity were struggling for the mastery. It was an age of great men, of quickened thought, and expanded intelligence. The splendour and picturesqueness of the past still remained as a background to all the new impulses of modern life, to the keen curiosity and eagerness of the adventurer, the widened enterprise of the merchant, and the widened world, free, as it had never been before, to all manner of research and excursion of the thinker. And in front of this great glowing gorgeous canvas, the whole foreground is taken up with the figures of two women — representatives, as it were, of the

two halves of the world, who tore that world asunder in their day, and kept all Europe astir with their deadly conflict, and who have handed down to us the same unending struggle, and stand opposed at the present moment, two haughty shades, with a hundred unsolved questions between them, exciting men's passions and disturbing their judgment, though it is nearly three hundred years since one of them died proudly in the height of her life and genius, and the other in the desolation of royalty and old age. In presence of Elizabeth of England and Mary of Scotland it is scarcely possible for any historian to be impartial. His candour of mind must be infinite, and his power of sympathetic imagination intense, could he enter into all the details of their protracted duel without placing himself on one side or the other. And we should not have found fault with Mr Froude if he had yielded to this all but infallible temptation, and boldly taken up Elizabeth's standard. The hosts on the other side are numerous enough and ardent enough to maintain their own against any new champion. Mr Froude's attitude, however, is not that of a champion. He professes an impartiality above all bias, and he acknowledges the faults of his favourite with what he probably believes to be the fullest candour. But let any one compare the narrative of Elizabeth's duplicities, which were duplicities carried on in the full security of her throne, and in possession of an independence such as few monarchs have ever realised; and the contemptuous tale of Mary's trickeries, of her acting and histrionic powers at the supreme moment of her life, when human

charity is slow to doubt the truthfulness of the coarsest criminal,—and it will be seen how little confidence is to be placed in the impartiality of the historian. In the one case Mr Froude regretfully admits the unverity of his Queen, which, however, he is able to contemplate, with a certain philosophical calmness, rather as an unfortunate feature in her character for which she was scarcely to blame, than as a fault for which she was responsible; while in the other, his insinuated sneer intrudes into the very presence of death itself. He grins horribly a ghastly smile when the axe falls upon Mary's neck, and feels himself still at liberty to jeer when the dead face which had won so many hearts is held up, awful in the first distortion of slaughter. Mary at that moment had ceased to have any power to trouble Elizabeth; she had passed away and become as Helen, as Cleopatra, as all the other fair women who have disturbed the world, and yet been wept by it as its saints are seldom wept. This is something worse than partiality, almost worse than injustice. It is a sin not only against the conventional quality called good taste, but against the last rights of humanity. It is a sen-

timent which would fill us with horror and disgust were it manifested by any penny-a-liner at the present day in respect to the last moments of any ruffian of St Giles's. If one of our graphic friends of the 'Daily Telegraph' were to comment upon the stagy exit of a modern murderer—on his careful get-up, his sustained effort after sensation, the histrionic pose which he preserved under the very hands of Calcraft—what would Mr Froude think of the narrator? Yet Mr Froude does not hesitate to treat with a contempt which, coming from him, is not contemptible, the death of one of the greatest personages of her time, a woman of unquestionable genius and amazing force of character, whose history, position, and influence had as great an effect upon her age as that of any of her most distinguished contemporaries, and whose memory still retains the allegiance of an almost unanimous nation, and of enthusiastic partisans over all the world. Surely there is something more than unseemly, more than unjust, in so strange a treatment of such a subject.

The present writer is not one of those who believes in the so-called innocence of Mary Stuart.* We are free to admit that the general senti-

* [We think it proper to state that this very consideration decided us in selecting a critic for Mr Froude's work. We felt that any one at all imbued with a partisan's partiality for Queen Mary's memory would find it impossible to approach the task in anything like the temperate spirit which befits the critic's office. More than this, we felt that self-command would be called for in whoever undertook the duty, whatever the predilections of the writer might be; for it is to be hoped that there are few living men or women who could read Mr Froude's most deplorable performance without emotions of indignant disgust.

The war-dance of the savage over the mangled remains of his enemy may be as shocking and revolting sight, still it is an ebullition of human nature, however depraved; but for Mr Froude's attitude, as he stands by the scaffold of the ill-fated Queen, and points out, with ill-suppressed exultation, and with a horrible minuteness of detail, all the ghastly preliminaries, the epithet "inhuman" is far too gentle and forbearing.

He appears to feast his eyes upon the insulted remains of her who was peerless among fair women. He is able to tell us that the body was stripped, "the ears retaining their seats;" and when all is over, and the last brutality is perpetrated, he seems to leave the hall with lingering grudging glances, and a sort of ghoulish regret that nothing worse is left to chronicle.

Mr Froude sneers at the discomposure with which he believes Mary to have received the announcement of her impending fate on the strength of the French reporter's statement, that the queen was "*fâchée et déplaisante*" when the sudden intelligence was imparted to her.

ment in Scotland in respect to her, is to us, though a born Scot, an astonishing sentiment. The pages of *Maga*, loyal as she is to this as to other national prepossessions, may not seem a fit place to say so; but we will not weaken our criticism by pretending to share the belief of Mary's partisans. Innocence and Mary Stuart seem to us to have little to do with each other. A woman full of genius and passion, with the blood of the Stuarts and the Tudors mingling in her ardent veins, with unbounded sway over the hearts of others, and strong in that peculiar form of self-control which makes self-indulgence all the more intense because voluntary, it is, in fact, an injury to Mary to talk of her complete innocence. The real force of her character is altogether lost the moment we attempt to make out for her that transparent plea. Was she a fool to be caught in snares so visible that the merest spark of intelligence would have been enough to preserve her from them? Was the training of the court of France a likely way of preserving such ingenuous ignorance? or was the time itself so delicate as to keep the most tenderly-nurtured maiden in such a state of dove-like simplicity? That fine, subtle, penetrating intellect, full of resource and readiness and splendid courage—with eloquence to match that of any special pleader of her time, and dauntless as any hero—are we to suppose the rude Scotch nobles so much more than a match for her, that they have left on her name a stigma which a dozen generations of idolaters have not been able to wipe off? And, indeed, the crime

itself, but for a certain devilish appropriateness to the political exigencies of the moment, was not so unprecedented as readers of a comparatively innocent age are apt to suppose. Had Mary been a man like her respectable relative Henry VIII., for whom Mr Froude has so much sympathy, Darnley's death would have sunk to the rank of a peccadillo in the records of her history; and nobody would have expected of her that she could live a quiet religious life in her English prison, meekly praying for her enemies, frowning upon all attempts on the life of her rival, and pensively indifferent to that bigger diadem of England, which hung like the sword of the story over her imprisoned head by a single thread.

It is perhaps hard to enter into the mental being of those whose struggle for personal right has produced nothing but evil to humanity, and to understand how entirely the impulse which moved them to the making of wars and destructions might be a just and natural impulse. The world, three hundred years ago, refused to attempt such an inquiry. To it a usurper was a usurper, an impostor an impostor, without any inquiry into the appearance of things as presented to his individual vision. Conscious fraud, which is the rarest thing in the world, was to the mind of our fathers as universal almost as the daylight. Their enemies opposed them, not out of an innocent or possibly laudable adherence to individual views of their own, but out of sheer spite and malice. Every man who defended himself for a course of

He had given her due credit for fortitude elsewhere, but is so steeped in venom as to break out in spite of himself into this inconsistency. To say that she was "*fasché et déplaisante*" at the news that on the morrow she was to die a terrible death, appears to us an almost grotesquely inadequate description of the emotions which any human being would experience on such an occasion.

We would quarrel with the French narrator for the feebleness of his language—Mr Froude deduces from it that Mary's courage faltered. Mr Froude has dealt his own reputation a murderous blow, and he will indeed be the most undeservedly fortunate of men, if the public and posterity, in reading these pages of his, express themselves as nothing more than "*fasché et déplaisante*."

action which seemed to them evil, was playing a part. That he could fail to know that he was wrong in pursuing his own interests instead of theirs, was a notion simply incomprehensible. The homely primitive wisdom of the race might indeed assert that what is one man's meat is another man's poison; but neither in politics nor religion could any party understand its application. The idea that orthodoxy is my doxy, and heterodoxy that of all who disagree with me, is the very simplest form of that principle which, in its full development, goes further, and asserts that your doxy is invented of malice prepense to oppose mine, and that you are perfectly aware all the time that yours is wrong, but hold by it to disturb or vex or embarrass me. The modern world professes to have gone quite beyond this canon, and to acknowledge that force of individual conviction which changes the aspect of matters altogether, and thrusts absolute conscious deception into a corner, dethroning it from its vulgar standing as one of the most important of human agencies. By this time the minds which sway the world have come to allow that people who are opposed to them may at least believe they are in the right, and that every shield has two sides. It is strange that Mr Froude, of all men, should be the one to resort to the old theory. But human nature is too strong for theory, too strong for philosophy, and all the studies and all the skill of the ablest of modern historians have not been able to shelter him from its temptations.

Mr Froude has evidently taken infinite pains with the character of Queen Elizabeth. He has thrown himself into the picture, if not with all his heart, at least with all the powers of his mind. There is no enthusiasm in the portrait, no attempt to transfer to it any ideal excellence, or to hold it up as a model to be followed; and perhaps the traces of a foregone conclusion

are too perceptible in its lines. But no doubt can be entertained of the care bestowed upon it, and the conscientious endeavour made to represent fully and candidly the character of this extraordinary woman. Mr Froude indeed goes back and back upon his description, as we sometimes see done in a novel when the writer is a little uncertain of his dramatic powers. He is afraid to trust his Elizabeth to demonstrate herself, either because of the ambiguity of her proceedings, or because he fears she will not retain so exactly as might be desired the likeness of the image he has made. Whenever he has a chance he lays down for us over again the leading principles of her mind, and with a care and ingenuity which it is impossible to overestimate, keeps these principles before himself and "proves" them as a theologian proves a dogma, by texts, as it were, from her discourses, her letters, her private talk, and all the gossip that buzzed about her. Never was a more elaborate study. He looks at her all round as if she were a curious scientific example, takes careful views of her from a hundred different points, gives her to us in as many different poses as if she were a *figurante*. It is evidently his intention that she should be the central figure in his picture, distinctly discriminated, from all competitors, a figure thoroughly realisable and formed of flesh and blood. And when we say this, we feel, had we nothing to add, that we have written Mr Froude's justification for the different way in which he has treated Mary. It is Elizabeth who is his queen, it is in her that he would fain concentrate all the light and interest, it is she whom he feels to be the lady and mistress of the age. His preference may surprise us, but still it is perfectly possible, and we should not have a word to say. For are there not historians upon Mary's side who concentrate the light upon *her* head, and leave Elizabeth in the blackness of darkness? The peculi-

arity in Mr Froude's case is that his Elizabeth, though so elaborately drawn, is not in any sense his ideal. He studies without approving her, without finding any intrinsic value in her. He does not love her nor praise her, nor is he even warmed into urgent sympathy. He has no special new light to throw upon her character which might endear her to him, as any bleak new-found peak, rising out of the unknown seas, endears itself to the explorer. The only novelty in his view of her is the philosophical latitudinarianism in point of religion with which he credits her. He allows her to be mean, avaricious, ungrateful, unfaithful, untrue. He makes it clear that no dependence could be placed in her either by word or deed. There is not a word of panegyric in the whole laboured full-length, in which we seem to see the very pearls with which her robe is embroidered, the solemn ruff, the creaking shoes. This absence of ideality or partiality in the portrait perplexes us when we turn to his treatment of her rival. Why then, if Elizabeth is not to be elevated, is Mary to be degraded? Why so contemptuous an indifference to the motives of the one and so minute a regard to those of the other? What's Hecuba to him, we say instinctively, that he should cast dirt at another on her account? There is no feeling involved in the matter, unless it be the feeling of the artist, who, conscious of having made a very careful study, falls so much in love with that, that he will not even do the rest of his work or himself full justice, lest the perfection of the whole should take away something from the elaborate workmanship of the first completed part. It is a curious piece of solemn folly, and yet so he has willed it. He is not enamoured of Elizabeth, but he is enamoured of his own pains, of the trouble he has taken, and all the laborious details of his manufacture. He uncovers himself with a certain solemnity in her presence, as if he said, "Though she

is not much to brag of, and I have told you so, still she is Elizabeth, and hats off; whereas the other is but Mary her prisoner, whom I have no time to take so much trouble about, in whose face let us flourish our caps; and should we find her out in any by-play, laugh in our sleeves, or without them if occasion requires. When Elizabeth does her by-play, we do not laugh, nor even look aside, but fix our eyes upon it steadily and respectfully, and swallow what we cannot ignore." Such is the position Mr Froude has chosen to occupy in respect to these two queens. Our own impression is that the canvas would have been richer and the work more worthy had he taken the same trouble in both cases, and we cannot even see how the unity of the picture is benefited by the elaboration of one half and scamping of the other. The historian, however, it is plain, thinks otherwise. He gives his heroine the benefit of all those new lights of observation which clear up the darkness of human motives, and show us, as far as anything can, not only what things were done, but why things were done, which on the outside express but feebly the meaning of the doer. He takes the pains to tell us why Elizabeth thought as she did, by what means her susceptibilities were blunted in one direction and sharpened in another, how circumstances had moulded her, how nature compelled her to many a doubtful action; but he takes Mary in the mass after the old fashion, without taking the trouble to inquire how things looked to her from within. She is to him a simple impostor, an actress of accomplished powers, a very fine and thoroughly self-conscious cheat, never forgetting, never abandoning, the arts which are dearer to her than anything in earth or heaven. Mr Froude would probably think it bigotry of the blackest description and folly scarcely less than ludicrous were we to call Mahomet an impostor, or—very much further down in the scale—were we even to impute

that title without explanation or mitigation to Cagliostro. But he gives it unhesitatingly to Mary Stuart. He follows her through scenes which thrill the pulses of the calmest reader with his sneer and his nickname—he dogs her stately steps through one crisis after another, in which she stands on such a precipice that, if one of her nameless women were in question, he would allow it to be tragic and terrible—and points out to us, with a suppressed chuckle, what position her feet are placed in, and how careful she has been about the folds of her gown. Nay, he watches her die, which is the one moment in life which commands the awe of every spectator, be the dying creature ever so mean or miserable, and smiles his best, though it is hard work, and tries to tell us that death too is a fine piece of acting. We repeat that, if he did this to heighten the light around the head of an ideally noble Elizabeth, there might be some semblance of excuse. But his Elizabeth is only a careful piece of work, and not an ideal; and he has sacrificed the wonderful splendour of the contrast, and the amazing problem of such a mind and life as those of Mary, to a mere superstition in favour of his own handiwork. Such a mistake is its own punishment; and yet it is one of the strangest mistakes into which a writer like Mr Froude could fall.

The office of the imagination as an intellectual agent has been much discussed and much exalted, but what we may call its moral influence has been but little taken into consideration. Invention is but one of its gifts, and, we believe, not the greatest. Its highest mission in this world is that of comprehension. Half the unkindnesses, half the cruelties and harsh judgments of life, spring from a deficiency of this all-important quality. The mind which cannot put itself in another's place, nor identify another's point of view, is, however just and scrupulous, continually in danger of making false decisions.

There is such a thing, to be sure, as a redundancy of imagination and sympathy, which goes far to obliterate the limits of right and wrong altogether, and to account for every action, however base; but deficiency is much more general than redundancy. Mr Froude has imagination enough for here and there a very vivid piece of description; and he has, when he chooses to exercise it (as in the wonderful account of Darnley's death in a previous volume), a sufficiently powerful sympathetic faculty to throw himself into the troubled being of another, and interpret it with touching and solemn truthfulness; but he has aversions which baffle and confuse the imagination. His mind stops short at Mary's prison door. All the strange conflict of thought that must have gone on there—the questions that may have risen in the silence—the recollections that must have peopled the solitude—the mass of passions, prejudices, wrongs, and rights—religious convictions, such as experience shows can dwell beside the memory of great crimes without any conscious hypocrisy,—Mr Froude closes the door upon them all with a certain contempt. The workings of Mary's mind are nothing to him; the amount of truth she may have had to back her does not interest him. He does not care what she hopes, what she fears, or what she believes; and yet she must have hoped much, feared much, and believed something, or else human nature has strangely changed. Of all the men and women alive on the earth we question if there was one more profoundly interesting than she whom the historian with airy insolence speaks of as the Lady of Tutbury. A tragic past, brimming over with passion and misery—a future equally tragic, though less unhappy—a present ever filled with the glimmer of such a possibility as was enough to make any ordinary head dizzy and faint—the possibility of being suddenly converted any moment from a neglected cap-

tive to the queen of a great nation, are themselves enough to fill every movement of Mary's with interest. She had lived wildly and loved fiercely, and experienced every kind of adventure and vicissitude. She had walked as an enchantress among men, with lives cast under her feet like flowers; and she had sat for years at her embroidery-frame counting the weary days like any unwilling nun. From one extreme to another she had been drifted; and had retained her energy, her quick wit, and wonderful intelligence through all. If such a being as this can be explained in one word, then has history indeed grown easy, and it is an unnecessary waste of labour to expend such a mind as that of Mr Froude upon the simple and *banal* tale.

His explanation of Mary is as follows: She was an ambitious, restless *intrigante*—a scheming adventuress, conscious of crime, such as excluded her from all rights and sympathies, and aware that the existence of a Magdalen out of sight of mankind was her fit lot; yet ungrateful to the hand that fed and sheltered her—plotting against her hostess and relative—ready even to go the length of murder—taking advantage of certain prejudices about religion to attract the discontented to her side, and undermine her kind, much-enduring, too indulgent cousin. Of these religious prejudices, and of another popular delusion in respect to the rights of princes, the woman availed herself, as any modern actress might avail herself of a British public's sentiments about virtue and its infallible rewards—the rights of princes and the Catholic religion being in reality no more to her than the sentiment of poetic justice is to any heroine on the Surrey boards. To fight by means of these weaknesses, or any other she could find out, for advantage to herself, was her highest spring of action, and the gracefulness of her own *pose* her most real interest. When the one could no longer be

pursued, then she fell back on the other; and it is doubtful whether the gratification of grasping at a new crown, or the grand artistic triumph of dying *en martyre*, with every detail and accessory in the highest keeping, was the greatest to her deceitful soul. Mr Froude commends her courage much as he would that of a dancer on the tight-rope who faces the perils of her profession without flinching; and gives us a sketch of the fantastic elaboration of the dress in which she went through her last scene with a great deal less respectfulness than had she been that same tight-rope dancer lying crushed in her gauzy skirts and spangles at the point where she fell. That fall would have made the dancer into a solemn thing; but even the hall at Fotheringay does not overawe Mr Froude's scepticism, or drive the sneer from his face. Death has no solemnity for him when it is Mary Stuart who is to undergo it. She is the same miserable charlatan in her end as during all her career. All feigned and false and artificial are her dignity, her tenderness, her religion, even her face. She was a great actress. Mrs Siddons, perhaps, would scarcely have done it so well,—such is the summary way in which the historian dismisses Mary of Scotland to her grave.

But yet there is a very different picture to be made. Mary had been for seventeen years a weary captive in her rival's power; and long ere now all sense of being a Magdalen had, without doubt, faded from her mind. Darnley and the Kirk-of-Field troubled her no more than Anne Boleyn and the block troubled her worthy uncle Henry in the later part of his career. Their consciences were robust, and shadows did not last. Everything connected with that wild episode of love and murder had evidently disappeared from Mary's healthful elastic soul. Bothwell himself had disappeared from her like a cast-off garment, and there is no evidence of either

remorse or repentance in her. She had thrown off the impression of that nightmare as one does on awaking, and her splendid vitality had got the better of it. But there were other things which she had no temptation to forget. She was a good Catholic, and without any reference to her own claims at all, must necessarily have held Elizabeth to be illegitimate. She *was* illegitimate according to all natural and legal rules; and had she been but Mistress Elizabeth, the daughter of a profligate squire, no one would have entertained any doubt on the subject. Mary was woman enough, notwithstanding her own defects, to regard her cousin's birth with a certain horror; and Elizabeth was, besides, under the ban of the Church—a sentence to which we have no ground for supposing Mary to have been indifferent. If she had not been firmly convinced that Elizabeth had no right to the throne, and that she herself ought to occupy it as legitimate next of kin, she would have been the most philosophical woman of her day—and philosophy was not the special characteristic of her genius. And she had been brought up in the full faith of absolutism, with such a confidence in the sacredness of her rank as it is impossible to conceive any one entertaining nowadays. At that period divine right was no tradition, but a reality, and it is simply impossible that Mary could have had any acquired disbelief in it. It must have been her creed that an anointed queen was beyond trial or condemnation, that whosoever laid hands upon her even in obedience to the law was violating a higher law. Therefore her position in England, from her own point of view, must have been one of unmitigated wrong. It was she who was the true heir, yet she was pining in prison; it was she who alone could bring back the nation to the true faith, yet the very exercise of that faith in a manner becoming her rank was forbidden to her. Elizabeth held

the throne in defiance of law and of the Church, oppressing the party which it was most natural for Mary to recognise as the people—the only part of it she had any familiar acquaintance with. These views are not our views, nor have we any sympathy with them; but they were hers, and she had, according to her own education and principles, a perfect right to believe that the highest service she could render to God and the nation was to manage matters so as that she should reign in Elizabeth's stead. It was not only her interest, but her duty. The advantage (she must have thought) of a people which was being trained to heresy—the good of the Church, the interests of her son and of her faithful dependants, all demanded of her that she should vanquish Elizabeth, if any exertion could do that. And thus, if Mary had comported herself so as to give Mr Froude satisfaction, she would, to her own consciousness and to that of her party, have been a traitor and a coward. It is in vain to shirk this side of the question. Such must have been her belief; and every day she passed in prison, every indignity that was done her, must have heightened her sense of injustice, and intensified her longing for deliverance. In such circumstances inaction only was sinful. Mr Froude does not appear to see how much those absolute rights and wrongs of hers increase the interest of the scene. Almost all Europe was on her side; and probably a third part at least of the English people, if free to give their opinion, would have held her cause a just one. That which to Mr Froude appears a hopeless mass of intrigue, was to her the highest necessity of her position: as legitimate heir to claim her own rights; as her son's mother to establish his; as a true Catholic to secure the victory of her faith; as a patriot even—for this plea is also admissible in the circumstances—to seek what must have appeared to her the true

advantage of the people. That we differ with her on every point, or that Mr Froude differs with her, has actually nothing to do with the subject. Such—unless she were the most generous, the most unselfish, the most philosophical and enlightened of women, centuries before her age, and superior to her education—must have been Mary's belief. She was not grateful to the rival who kept her in tedious bondage, and declined to make any response to her just claims. She was not scrupulous in the means she employed, nor considerate of Elizabeth's safety, nor much concerned for her life. People in those days were not delicate about the peace of mind, or even the lives of their adversaries; and we claim for Mary no virtue superior to her age. She was daring, shifty, unscrupulous, using every weapon that came to her hand, and caring much less for the means than for the end; but that she possessed that without which it is impossible to believe in any long-continued struggle—a sense of right on her side—we cannot for one moment doubt. And this Mr Froude persistently ignores.

Elizabeth was not so incredulous. It was the truth of Mary's claim that made her fear. Had circumstances made it possible for them to live in outward semblance of harmony, the spirit of the position would have been unchanged, except in so far that Elizabeth must have been forced to acknowledge and allow at least Mary's right of inheritance. But the fact that amity between them was impossible, and that Mary had contrived to render herself obnoxious to her own native kingdom, and a bugbear to a large portion of the English people, does not affect the question of her natural rights, nor of her consciousness of them, and of the duties involved in them. Her sins, however fully proved, did not and could not, to herself at least, make any difference in the

matter, unless, indeed, to heighten her eagerness for the recognition of her claims, since even a momentary faltering would have been a confession of guilt. Had she retired from the field and given up the conflict, it would, no doubt, have been a great convenience to England and Elizabeth, but it must have been an utter abandonment of the last residue of duty and use which remained in Mary's life.

This, however, is a view which Mr Froude seems incapable of perceiving. He seems to expect that the Queen of Scots ought to have judged and condemned herself, and remorselessly carried out the sentence. That natural operation of the human mind which converts a long suspension of execution into a positive right of escape does not seem to be known to him. He takes it for granted that Mary must have been continually conscious that she had forfeited her life, and all her individual rights, which it is very evident Mary never dreamt of being. She stands to him in the position which an excommunicated person would stand in to a bigoted Catholic. Men are free to lie to her, to cheat her, to use the basest means of betraying her confidence, without any guilt. They are free to insult her, to forget every delicacy and courtesy becoming gentlemen. It is guilt to aid her, almost a sin to say a civil word. The very faithfulness of her dependants he thinks no credit to them. A woman may forfeit her life, and yet retain her right to courtesy and pity, and such solace as humanity can give. She may be wicked, and yet not be worthy of treatment like a dog; but to Mary, in Mr Froude's eyes, no charity, no allowance should be shown. His account of the immediate means employed to determine her death are curiously instructive on this point, and so is his narration of the execution, which we quote below. The manner in which she was betrayed at last into the hands of Elizabeth was one of

the basest pieces of treachery ever perpetrated. It may be necessary for statesmen to employ spies, and make use of the meanest instruments to keep them informed of their enemy's tactics—and at that period any fine scruples as to the lawfulness or honourableness of such channels of knowledge did not exist; but when we consider that this heartless plot is discussed and described at full length without a word of disapproval on the part of the historian, or anything to show that he thinks Walsingham's scheme anything but justifiable and legitimate, Mr Froude's virtuous indignation at Mary's histrionics becomes more and more amazing and incredible. The Catholics of that day held, it is said, that no faith need be kept with heretics, and this is evidently Mr Froude's opinion with respect to Mary. Every practice against her was fair and honest. She had to be trapped like a wild beast, and what did it matter which was the way?

Mary was taking no special part in anything at the time this plot was devised—not from want of will, but from want of opportunity. She had been for some time deprived of any means of communicating with her friends in which she could place the slightest confidence, and so had been out of all the plots of the moment, more silent and inoffensive than usual. But Elizabeth was in great difficulty between her allies in the Netherlands and Philip of Spain. She hated the Dutch, and yet had been obliged to support them; and her whole mind at the moment was set upon the negotiation of a private treaty with Philip, by which she intended to throw over the Hollanders, save herself from the expense of a costly war on their account, and the country from all fear of a Spanish invasion—an invasion which would have had for its object the re-establishment of the Catholic Church, and installation either of Mary of Scotland or of Philip himself upon the English throne. To do this she

would have broken her faith without compunction to the Dutch, and betrayed all her allies; and it was only the wisdom of Elizabeth's counsellors, not her own, which perceived the real advantage she had in being at the head of Protestantism throughout the world. To convince her that it was her interest to play anybody false rather than the Dutch, and to put no faith in Philip, Walsingham turned his eyes upon Mary in her prison as bird-fanciers do upon a captive bird. She should be the lure. He would lay bare all that was and might be plotting in the Catholic world to his mistress through her means, and probably catch Mary too in the snare, a double advantage. It was with this cold-blooded intention that he concocted his plan—a plan which, for diabolical skill in invention, and pitiless steadfastness in the carrying out, has perhaps never been surpassed. That Elizabeth's Ministers should not have shrunk from such means of procuring information is probably natural; but how Mr Froude, who is so hard upon Mary's deceptions, should be able to put such a plot on record without one word of reprobation—rather, indeed, as if he approved the villanous scheme and felt it to be wholly justifiable—is a wonder greater than the plot itself, and one which we confess ourselves altogether unable to understand.

After giving an account of Elizabeth's vacillations and perplexities, and Walsingham's anxiety to clear them up, Mr Froude proceeds as follows:—

“There was one way, and perhaps only one, by which all these questions could be answered. The Queen of Scots must be again enabled to open a correspondence which she and her friends could believe to be perfectly safe, and her letters and theirs must be passed through the hands of Walsingham. Round her, so long as she lived, conspiracy, whether European or English, necessarily gathered. Nothing had been done in the past, and nothing had been projected, on which her advice had not

first been asked and taken. She had agents at every Court, who took pains that at least to her every fibre of the truth should be known. Political correspondence throughout her residence in England had been the occupation of her life. . . . What Walsingham wanted was a sustained, varied correspondence with many persons, protracted for an indefinite time—with the Pope, with Philip, with her son, with the Archbishop of Glasgow, with Guise, Mendoza, and the English refugees. In possession of this, he could either convince his mistress of her own unwisdom, or satisfy himself that she was right, and that the treaty might safely go forward. But the problem was an extremely difficult one. He must find some one who could obtain the confidence of all these persons, and induce them to trust him with their letters. He must in some way or other enable this person to convey the letters to the Queen of Scots, and convey back her answers. He dared not venture the experiment without Elizabeth's permission. She gave it, and she kept the secret to herself. It was impossible to say what strange revelations might be before her. For all she could tell, for all Walsingham could tell, half her Cabinet might be found privately in the Queen of Scots' interest. Mary Stuart was the next immediate heir to the crown. Elizabeth had refused to allow her to be disinherited; and English public men were but mortal, and might have thought it but common prudence to make their peace in time."

The instrument was not long of being found. A certain Gilbert Gifford, of a good Staffordshire family, whose father was at the moment imprisoned in London for "continued recusancy," and one of whose brothers was a plotting Jesuit wholly given up to the cause of the Church, "offered his services, and the opportunities at his command, to the English Government." These opportunities were immense, as may be supposed. He was himself a Jesuit in deacon's orders, brought up at the seminary of Rheims, intimately acquainted with, and fully trusted by, many of Mary's friends. No suspicion could attach to communications forwarded through his means. But when this grand preliminary had been accomplished, there were still other pre-

parations needful. Mary had to be removed (as she had long vainly prayed to be, disliking the place) from her well watched and guarded residence at Tutbury to another of a humbler character, where she might be betrayed with less risk of discovery. She had at the same time to be driven desperate by one or two other amiable means of exasperation—as, for instance, the complete cessation of any means of correspondence whatever except through Walsingham, and news of her son such as might well have driven any poor woman frantic. She was told that James had transferred to Elizabeth the title of mother, and was growing every day more confirmed in his Protestantism and more opposed to herself. She was "marvellously incensed" by this information, "protesting that she was spoiled of her son by violence, complaining in very sharp and bitter terms, having lost all patience, and crying vengeance against her enemies." Having thus wrought the unhappy woman up into a state of frantic readiness to seize any hand of help that might be held out to her, "Elizabeth made a favour of consenting to her change of residence, and accompanied it with a lecture on irritability." She held open the door of the trap with a scold and an apparent grudge. The captive deserved no such favour; but as she had set her heart on it, why, she should have it. There was Chartley Manor close by, which Sir Amyas Paulet might look at, since Mary so desired it. And thus the last step was taken for the perfection of the plot.

"Mary Stuart was delighted with the change, and utterly unsuspecting. Elizabeth's homily had worked her into a frenzy, which Paulet had studiously aggravated, 'making her disclose her passions in writing, which were far more violent than in her speech.' He had affected to persuade her to remain at Tutbury, though Elizabeth had consented to her removal. He had made her only, as he probably intended, the more eager to go. She said if she was

kept at Tutbury 'she would die in her bad lodging, with other bitter words, wherein she was no niggard when she was moved with passion.' She went Walsingham's way, believing it to be her own; and before Christmas she was comfortably established in her new home.

"At once there dropped upon her, as if from an invisible hand, a ciphered letter from her faithful Morgan. Paulet had been taken into confidence with Phillipps, Walsingham's secretary, an accomplished master of the art of cipher, and one other person whose assistance Phillipps had secured—a brewer at Burton, who supplied Chartley with ale. A separate cask was furnished for the Queen of Scots' ladies and secretaries; a hint was in some way conveyed to Nau to examine it closely; and when the ale was drawn off there was found at the bottom a small water-tight box of wood, in which was Morgan's packet. It contained an introduction of Gilbert Gifford, as 'a Catholic gentleman well brought up in learning,' on whom the Queen of Scots might thoroughly depend, and with whose assistance she might correspond with himself and with her other friends in England and elsewhere. The cask came in weekly. The box, re-enclosed in the empty barrel, would carry out her answers, and the chain of communication was at once complete.

"The brewer had been purchased by high and complicated bribes. He was first paid by Walsingham; next, he was assured of lavish rewards from the Queen of Scots, which, to secure her confidence, it was necessary to permit him to receive; lastly, like a true English scoundrel, he used the possession of a State secret to exact a higher price for his beer. Phillipps came to reside at Chartley under the pretence of assisting Paulet in the management of his household. Every letter conveyed to the Queen of Scots, and every letter which she sent in return, was examined and copied by him before it was forwarded to its destination; and Morgan's introduction of Gifford, which betrayed her into Walsingham's hands, was the first on which he had to exercise his skill.

"Gifford himself, too young and innocent-looking, as he appeared to Paulet, for so involved a transaction, had organised his own share of it with a skill which Sir Amyas's blunter mind failed at first to comprehend. Sir Amyas thought that his remuneration from Walsingham ought to have

contented him. Gifford, wiser than he, knew that gratuitous services were suspicious. He wrote to the Queen of Scots saying that he was honoured in being of use to her, but reminding her that he was risking his life, and capitulating for a pension. At points between Burton and London he had found Catholic gentlemen with whose assistance the packets were transmitted. They were told no more than that they contained letters of supreme importance to the cause. One of them, who resided nearest to Burton, received a bag weekly from the brewer, and carried it on to the next, by whom it was again forwarded, so it was passed from hand to hand to the Jesuit agency in London. The treachery was at Chartley only. From the time that the letters left the brewer's house, they were tampered with no more. The London Jesuits receiving them by their confidential channel, and little dreaming that they were transcribed already, distributed them to their ciphered addresses, and returned answer in the same way, which again, after inspection by Phillipps, were deposited in the cask. Gifford was at first upon the spot and active in person, but when the road was once established he was needed no more. He went abroad again to see Morgan, and gather information wherever he was trusted. In his absence his cousin took his place as an unconscious instrument of the ruin of the lady whom he worshipped as his queen. All parties in the correspondence had special designations. In the letters of Mary Stuart, Gilbert passed by the name of Pietro; the cousin, of Emilio. Between Paulet and Walsingham the brewer was christened, in irony, 'the honest man;' Gilbert was Walsingham's 'friend;' and the cousin, the 'substitute.'

"Six persons only were in possession of the full secret. Elizabeth and Walsingham, by whom the plot had been contrived; Gifford and the brewer, who were its instruments; Phillipps, by whom the ciphers were transcribed and read; and Paulet, whom it had been found necessary to trust. All the rest were puppets who played their parts at the young Jesuit's will. The ciphers threatened at first to be a difficulty. Phillipps was a practised expert, and with time could, perhaps, have mastered all of them; but time was an element of which there was none to spare, where a correspondence was to be watched but not detained, and where a delay in the transmission might lead to discovery. The over-confidence of Morgan, how-

ever, in Gifford's probity deprived the unlucky Mary of this last protection. Fearing that his old ciphers might have been discovered, he drew fresh tables, not for his own use only, but for the whole party of the Paris conspirators — for Guise, for Mendoza, for the Archbishop of Glasgow, for Paget, and for Arundel; and he forwarded duplicates to the Queen of Scots. The key of his own, which unlocked the rest, he gave to Gifford to carry to her, and the very first letter which she availed herself of her recovered opportunity to write, was in this identical cipher. It was to 'Pietro's father,' old Gifford, who was in the Tower, full of tender consolation, and of promises that if ever she became his sovereign, his own and his son's services should not be forgotten.

"The very inmost secrets of the Catholic confederacy were now opened to Walsingham's inspection. The papers which he was about to see were from the men at whose instigation, if England was really to be invaded, the enterprise would be set on foot. . . . The exact truth would be told to the Queen of Scots, and she herself in time would reveal her most inward purpose. It would be ascertained now whether he or Elizabeth had been right."

Thus by a plot as clever and as nefarious as was ever conceived, Mary was betrayed. Mr Froude is willing to allow that there must have been an "inherent scoundrelism of temperament" in Gifford, the principal agent of it, and in the brewer its lowest instrument; but we are left to suppose that it was rather virtuous than otherwise in Elizabeth thus to tempt her cousin to destruction. We do not ourselves see that the actual forgery of the documents with which Mary's partisans have charged the English Government, would have been much worse; and it certainly would have required less heartless and continued cruelty. The information gained by this abominable means was not immediately satisfactory. It showed that the Catholic world was very dubious, very much divided, very uncertain what step to take next; and no doubt, had Elizabeth acted immediately by the instructions thus given her, the treaty with Philip might have been perfectly feasible. But by-and-by a new

and strange light stole over the darkling scene, at which the Queen and her Ministers peeped with all the excitement of clandestine watchers. One can imagine the half-incredulous delight with which Walsingham must have started at his key-hole when he began to perceive how, beyond all his hopes, the maddened, heart-sick, worn-out Mary was about to betray herself into his hands. Mysterious hints of something brewing that might deliver her, made the secret listeners prick up their ears. "It must have been with profound curiosity," says Mr Froude, "that both Elizabeth and Walsingham must have watched the effect upon the Queen of Scots." His sympathy is with the spies behind the door, not with the trapped creature, panting with hopes of final deliverance, and pitifully unconscious of the eyes that watched her who sat within. It was the Babington conspiracy against Elizabeth's life that was brewing, and no doubt it must have given her a certain thrill of excitement in passing, to hear of "the means in hand to remove the beast that troubles all the world." Mr Froude, however, mingles so carefully the narrative of what was going on outside, and Gifford's other treacheries, with the story of Mary's letters, that the careless reader will be apt to attribute all Elizabeth's knowledge of this conspiracy to the Chartley correspondence, which is very far from being the case. The mysterious hints about the removal of the beast were accompanied by many much more lengthy and important-seeming details about an invasion led by the Prince of Parma, and about the plans for her own personal deliverance; and the conspiracy itself is only fully unveiled in one letter from Babington, in which it seems to occupy one sentence, while the Prince of Parma and her escape fill up pages. But we do not attempt to defend Mary, or to suppose in her any squeamishness about acquiescence in such a conspiracy. What was Elizabeth doing

in that dark closet watching every secret movement of her prisoner? Was not she conspiring diabolically in cold blood, and, what was worse, tempting the unhappy one to her fate? It was a duel *à outrance*, and why should Mary hesitate? To kill or to be killed was the inevitable conclusion, and Mary Stuart was no meek sufferer, forgiving her enemies and blessing those who cursed her.

When the crisis for which they had been plotting had come, and at last Babington's welcome letter, with details which nobody could mistake, was put into her hands, the conspirators on the other side stood still and held their breath, with an excitement which it is easy to realise. Here was the tragic point on which life and death depended. They watched her as a band of ruffians might watch a blinded creature wandering on the edge of a precipice; or as wreckers watch the ship which their false lights have beguiled on to a fatal shore. Would some angel interfere and save her at the last moment, or would nature, and hope, and wrong, and vengeance have their way?

"The interest grew deeper. Babington's letter was given immediately to Gifford; it was examined by Walsingham before it left London, and was forwarded by the usual road; and Phillippe, who had been in London, and there deciphered it, returned to Paulet at Chartley, to watch its effects. Mary Stuart knew Phillippe by sight—a spare, pock-marked, impassive, red-haired man, something over thirty. She had been already struck by his appearance. Morgan had suggested that he might not be proof against a bribe. She had tried him gently without success, but she had no particular suspicion of him. He knew the moment when the letter reached her. He knew that she had read it. When she drove out in her carriage afterwards, she passed him, and he bowed respectfully. 'I had a smiling countenance,' he said, 'but I thought of the verse, *Cum tibi dicit Ave. Sicut ab hoste cave.*' Some remorse he could not choose but feel. She was in his toils, and he was too certain that she would be involved in them. Another letter from her, and the work would be done.

'We attend,' he wrote, 'her very heart at the next.'"

What do our readers say? Is it Elizabeth, Walsingham, Phillipps, and Gifford, or Mary and Babington, that are most guilty of conspiracy and murder?—and how much had pure justice to do with the guidance of the world when the last died, and the first went free?

We have no more doubt, for our own part, that the letters were genuine, and that Mary (thinking it actually a matter of less importance than how she was to be carried off from Chartley, and restored to the *grand air* and sweets of freedom) consented to Elizabeth's assassination, than we have that Babington's band could not have assassinated a fly. A parcel of vain, foolish, riotous young braggarts—it is impossible to believe that Elizabeth, a woman of unquestionable courage, ever had a moment's real fear on account of their boyish conspiracy. It might have wounded her pride, for they were adherents of her court; but there is no evidence that they had any special access to her, or interested her in any way. The whole business came to nothing, as it would assuredly have done in any case. The wretched creatures were slaughtered with every possible atrocity permitted by the law, and Mary's doom was finally sealed. We do not pity Babington, and we are not even prepared to assert that it was not needful for the public peace that Mary should die. But how any historian of this nineteenth century can justify the transaction described above, is such a puzzle as we do not remember to have encountered before. "It was not to entrap her, Elizabeth could most honestly say," Mr Froude adds, with—is it a momentary hallucination?—and he explains to us that, "Had Mary been in the mood in which she pretended to be, the 'treachery' of Walsingham would have been the truest kindness, for it would have

dispelled effectually and for ever the remains of Elizabeth's mistrust." Can anybody explain this extraordinary sophistry? Does Mr Froude mean it?—or is it a bit of monomania? What! true kindness to spy into the very heart of a helpless prisoner, to ply her with temptations wellnigh irresistible—to create means of criminality for her, and watch in the dark how she rises to the horrible bait? Were such a course of procedure employed nowadays—nay, even the very shadow of it—towards the meanest criminal, what would the world, what would Mr Froude say?

We need not dwell upon the careful narrative of the panic raised in the country by the discovered conspiracy, the terrible executions, the ghost of invasion; nor upon the trial at Fotheringay, and Elizabeth's agitation and attempt to induce her faithful Sir Amyas Paulet to slaughter his prisoner comfortably out of hand, and free her from the responsibility; nor how at last she signed Mary's death-warrant, "among a number of other papers," and it was registered without examination as a new act referring to Ireland. All the confused excitement of the moment culminates in the one scene at Fotheringay, of which so many narratives have been given, and which Mr Froude now tells over again, as it has, we dare venture to say, never yet been told. The great actress prepares to go out of the world histrionically, and with the finest effect—such an accident as death being nothing to her but another occasion of display. This is how that wonderful scene, so familiar to us all, appears to the historian, and we may leave him, with little comment, to tell a tale, which perhaps our readers will agree with us is less to the historian's credit than it is to the queen's.

"At eight in the morning the provost-marshal knocked at the outer door which communicated with her suite of apartments. It was locked and no one answered, and he went back in some trepidation lest the fears

might prove true which had been entertained the preceding evening. On his returning with the sheriff, however, a few minutes later, the door was open, and they were confronted with the tall majestic figure of Mary Stuart standing before them in splendour. The plain grey dress had been exchanged for a robe of black satin; her jacket was of black satin also, looped and slashed and trimmed with velvet. Her false hair was arranged studiously with a coif, and over her head and falling down over her back was a white veil of delicate lawn. A crucifix of gold hung from her neck. In her hand she held a crucifix of ivory, and a number of jewelled paternosters were attached to her girdle. Led by two of Paulet's gentlemen, the sheriff walking before her, she passed to the chamber of presence in which she had been tried, where Shrewsbury, Kent, Paulet, Drury, and others were waiting to receive her. Andrew Melville, Sir Robert's brother, who had been Master of her Household, was kneeling in tears. 'Melville,' she said, 'you should rather rejoice than weep that the end of my troubles is come. Tell my friends I die a true Catholic. Commend me to my son. Tell him I have done nothing to prejudice his kingdom of Scotland; and so, good Melville, farewell.' She kissed him, and, turning, asked for her chaplain du Preau. He was not present. There had been a fear of some religious melodrama which it was thought well to avoid. Her ladies, who had attempted to follow her, had been kept back also. *She could not afford to leave the account of her death to be reported by enemies and Puritans, and she required assistance for the scene which she meditated.* Missing them, she asked the reason of their absence, and said she wished them to see her die. Kent said he feared they might scream or faint, or attempt perhaps to dip their handkerchiefs in her blood. She undertook that they should be quiet and obedient. 'The Queen,' she said, 'would never deny her so slight a request;' and when Kent still hesitated, she added with tears, 'You know I am cousin to your Queen, of the blood of Henry the Seventh, a married Queen of France, and anointed Queen of Scotland.'

"It was impossible to refuse. She was allowed to take six of her own people with her, and select them herself. She chose her physician, Burgoyne, Andrew Melville, the apothecary Gorion, and her surgeon, with two

ladies, Elizabeth Kennedy and Curll's young wife, Barbara Mowbray, whose child she had baptised.

"'Allons donc,' she then said, 'let us go;' and passing out, attended by the earls, and leaning on the arm of an officer of the guard, she descended the great staircase to the hall. The news had spread far through the country. Thousands of people were collected outside the walls. About three hundred knights and gentlemen of the county had been admitted to witness the execution. The tables and forms had been removed, and a great wood-fire was blazing in the chimney. At the upper end of the hall, above the fireplace, but near it, stood the scaffold, twelve feet square and two feet and a half high. It was covered with black cloth. A low rail ran round it, covered with black cloth also, and the sheriff's guard of halbardiers were ranged on the floor below on the four sides, to keep off the crowd. On the scaffold was the block, black like the rest. A square black cushion was placed behind it, and behind the cushion a black chair. On the right were two other chairs for the earls. The axe leant against the rail, and two masked figures stood as mutes on either side at the back. The Queen of Scots, as she swept in, seemed as if coming to take a part in some solemn pageant. Not a muscle of her face could be seen to quiver. She ascended the scaffold with absolute composure, looked round her, smiling, and sat down. Shrewsbury and Kent followed, and took their places. The sheriff stood at her left hand, and Beale then mounted a platform and read the warrant aloud.

"In all the assembly Mary Stuart appeared the person least interested in the words which were consigning her to death.

"'Madam,' said Lord Shrewsbury to her when the reading was ended, 'you hear what we are commanded to do!'

"'You will do your duty,' she answered, and rose as if to kneel and pray.

"The Dean of Peterborough, Dr Fletcher, approached the rail. 'Madam,' he began, with a low obeisance, 'the queen's most excellent majesty,'—'Madam, the queen's most excellent majesty.' Thrice he commenced his sentence, wanting words to pursue it. When he repeated the words a fourth time she cut him short.

"'Mr Dean,' she said, 'I am a Catholic, and must die a Catholic. It is useless to attempt to move me, and your prayers will avail me but little.'

"'Change your opinions, madam,' he cried, his tongue being loosed at last; 'repent of your sins, settle your faith in Christ, by Him to be saved.'

"'Trouble not yourself further, Mr Dean,' she answered; 'I am settled in my own faith, for which I mean to shed my blood.'

"'I am sorry, madam,' said Shrewsbury, 'to see you so addicted to Popery.'

"'That image of Christ you hold there,' said Kent, 'will not profit you, if He be not engraved in your heart.'

"She did not reply, and, turning her back on Fletcher, knelt for her own devotions.

"He had been evidently instructed to impair the Catholic complexion of the scene, and the Queen of Scots was determined that he should not succeed. When she knelt he commenced an extempore prayer in which the assembly joined. As his voice sounded out in the hall, she raised her own, reciting with powerful deep-chested tones the Penitential Psalms in Latin, introducing English sentences at intervals, that the audience might know what she was saying, and praying with especial distinctness for her holy father the Pope.

"From time to time, with conspicuous vehemence, she struck the crucifix against her bosom, and then, as the Dean gave up the struggle, leaving her Latin, she prayed in English wholly, still clear and loud. She prayed for the Church which she had been ready to betray, for her son whom she had disinherited, for the Queen whom she had endeavoured to murder. She prayed God to avert His wrath from England, that England which she had sent a last message to Philip to beseech him to invade. She forgave her enemies, whom she had invited Philip not to forget; and then, praying to the saints to intercede for her with Christ, and kissing the crucifix and crossing her own breast, 'Even as thy arms, O Jesus,' she cried, 'were spread upon the cross, so receive me into Thy mercy, and forgive my sins.'

"With these words she rose; the black mutes stepped forward, and in the usual form begged her forgiveness.

"'I forgive you,' she said, 'for now I hope you shall end all my troubles.' They offered their help in arranging her dress. 'Truly, my lords,' she said, with a smile to the earls, 'I never had such grooms waiting on me before.' Her ladies were allowed to come up upon the scaffold to assist her; for the work to be done was considerable, and

had been prepared with no common thought.

"She laid her crucifix on her chair. The chief executioner took it as a perquisite, but was ordered instantly to lay it down. The lawn veil was lifted carefully off, not to disturb the hair, and was hung upon the rail. The black robe was next removed. Below it was a petticoat of crimson velvet. The black jacket followed, and under the jacket was a body of crimson satin. One of her ladies handed her a pair of crimson sleeves, with which she hastily covered her arms; and thus she stood on the black scaffold with the black figures all around her, blood-red from head to foot.

"Her reasons for adopting so extraordinary a costume must be left to conjecture. *It is only certain that it must have been carefully studied, and that the pictorial effect must have been appalling.*

"The women, whose firmness had hitherto borne the trial, began now to give way, spasmodic sobs bursting from them which they could not check. "Ne criez vous," she said, "j'ay promis pour vous." Struggling bravely, they crossed their breasts again and again, she crossing them in turn, and bidding them pray for her. Then she knelt on the cushion. Barbara Mowbray bound her eyes with a handkerchief. 'Adieu,' she said, smiling for the last time, and waving her hand to them, 'Adieu, au revoir.' They stepped back from off the scaffold, and left her alone. On her knees she repeated the psalm, *In te, Domine, confido*,—"In thee, O Lord, have I put my trust." Her shoulders being exposed, two scars became visible, one on either side; and the earls being now a little behind her, Kent pointed to them with his white wand, and looked inquiringly at his companion. Shrewsbury whispered that they were the remains of two abscesses from which she had suffered while living with him at Sheffield.

"When the psalm was finished she felt for the block, and laying down her head, muttered, 'In manus, Domine, tuas, commendo animam meam.' The hard wood seemed to hurt her, for she placed her hands under her neck. The executioner gently removed them, lest they should deaden the blow; and then one of them holding her slightly, the other raised the axe and struck. The scene had been too trying even for the practised headsmen of the Tower. His arm wandered. The blow fell on

the knot of the handkerchief, and scarcely broke the skin. She neither spoke nor moved. He struck again, this time effectively. The head hung by a shred of skin, which he divided without withdrawing the axe; and at once a metamorphosis was witnessed, strange as was ever wrought by wand of fabled enchanter. The coif fell off and the false plaits. The laboured illusion vanished. The lady who had knelt before the block was in the maturity of grace and loveliness; the executioner, when he raised the head, as usual, to show it to the crowd, exposed the withered features of a grizzled, wrinkled old woman.

"So perish all enemies of the Queen," said the Dean of Peterborough. A loud Amen rose over the hall. 'Such end,' said the Earl of Kent, rising and standing over the body, 'to the Queen's and the Gospel's enemies.'

"Orders had been given that everything which she had worn should be immediately destroyed; that no relics should be carried off to work imaginary miracles. Sentinels stood at the doors, who allowed no one to pass out without permission; and after the first pause, the earls still keeping their places, the body was stripped. It then appeared that a favourite lap-dog had followed its mistress unperceived, and was concealed under her clothes; when discovered it gave a short cry, and seated itself between the head and the neck, from which the blood was still flowing. It was carried away and carefully washed, and then beads, paternoster, handkerchief, each particle of dress which the blood had touched, with the cloth on the block and on the scaffold, was burnt in the hall-fire in the presence of the crowd. The scaffold itself was next removed; a brief account of the execution was drawn up, with which Henry Talbot, Lord Shrewsbury's son, was sent to London, and then every one was dismissed."

This narrative speaks for itself, and we believe it is the first time that it has been told without some passing thrill of humanity. Mary Stuart was no martyr. Once more we repeat that we have no confidence whatever in the tale of her innocence. And we suppose she had technically forfeited her life by her complicity with Babington. But the

grand reproach and mystery of Mary's existence lay at the distance of half a lifetime from her punishment; and during that interval what tortures had she not suffered? A woman of action, a lover of pleasure, hot-blooded, overflowing with energy, she had been a captive for seventeen years; proud, she had been a dependant; vehement and eloquent, she had been silenced. The only legitimate affection that belonged to her had been alienated. She was impotent, she who felt such powers within her, and now the toils had gathered round her feet. She was caught like a wild beast, and treated like one, in defiance of all the formal charities of English law, as well as of human consideration. When she was told all suddenly and without warning that she was to die next day, she was "dreadfully agitated," Mr Froude tells us, justifying the expression by a French report that "*la Reyne d'Escoce fut fâchée et déplaisante de ces nouvelles.*" *Déplaisante!* Did Kent and Shrewsbury, we wonder, expect her to entertain them with agreeable talk in return for their news? As she comes forth, stately and calm, to the scaffold, is it possible that any man can look on and jeer at her? "O the pity of it! the pity of it!" cries Othello, not when he thinks his wife innocent, but when he believes her guilty. And the knowledge of all that woman has gone through—of her terrible tragic passions, her crime, her long torture, the awful page of life she is about to close—does it not penetrate with a yet profounder throb the heart of the bystander? But not Mr Froude's heart. No disgust seizes him when the two lords, in their brutal curiosity, silently consult each other about the scars on her bared shoulders. The voice of that Dean, whom we would fain throttle in his hideous profane impertinence, sounds dignified and seemly in the historian's ears, and it is only the

woman about to die whose prayers are an impertinence to him. A certain rage that she should escape him, and stand once more supreme on the edge of her grave, seems to seize upon him. No doubt he would, in point of fact, grant to any ruffian at the gallows-foot the priest he chooses to aid him, so far as any priest can aid; yet he can actually find words to tell us that Mary's confessor was denied to her "for fear of some religious melodrama." And when the last act is over, and the crimson gown which she has put on with pitiful womanishness is dyed double crimson, and the false hair falls off the dead head along with its other coverings, is it possible that even then a Christian gentleman can utter a snarl of contemptuous triumph over that horror of blood and death? It would seem a positive pleasure to him that now at the last even her boasted charms have yielded. She knelt down at the block "in the maturity of grace and loveliness;" but the head held up before the crowd "exposed the withered features of a grizzled, wrinkled old woman." This ghastly sneer haunts the imagination like a blasphemy. One feels one must have dreamt it, and that no man could have written such words in the calm of his study and in cold blood. The executioner's formula, "So die all enemies of the Queen," rises to the height of historical dignity after such a comment. She was the Queen's enemy; she was a standing danger to the public peace. She was (we believe) a woman who had been deeply criminal, and was not even deeply repentant. But Mary Stuart herself, with all her sins on her head, is more comprehensible than is the man who, three hundred years after her troublings have come to an end, is able to insult her dying, and throw an air of farce over the conclusion of such a tragedy as has seldom been witnessed by man.

LORD BYRON AND HIS CALUMNIATORS.

In July last we laid before our readers all that was then publicly known with regard to the unhappy circumstances which led to the separation of Lord and Lady Byron, and expressed a doubt whether the cause of that separation might not remain for ever "one of those enigmas which perpetually arouse the curiosity of generation after generation, only to disappoint it;" and we concluded our remarks with the observation, "that whatever real or fancied wrongs Lady Byron might have endured were shrouded in an impenetrable mist of her own creation—a poisonous miasma in which she had enveloped the character of her husband—raised by her breath, and which her breath only could have dispersed." That mist has now been suddenly and completely dispelled. For three months every newspaper has been filled, and every household in the kingdom inundated, with discussions on matters which one portion, at any rate, of our families never heard or read of, except when they occurred in the lesson for the day, or were met with in the history of Lot or of Amnon.

Mrs Beecher Stowe, the well-known American novelist, has told what she calls the "True Story of Lady Byron's Life;" and we may as well say, in the outset, that we see no reason to doubt either that Mrs Stowe received this story from the lips of Lady Byron, or that she believes it to be true. Our reasons for this will appear hereafter; and as we may have to comment somewhat severely on Mrs Stowe's conduct in the matter, it is but just that we should say at once that we do not accuse her of the iniquity of fabricating the revolting tale which she has published to the world, or of circulating it, knowing it to be false.

We enter upon the subject with reluctance; but justice to the memory of Lord Byron, still more to that of Mrs Leigh, and most of all to the feelings of English society, which have been so deeply outraged, force the unwelcome task upon us. We have no more right to shrink from the investigation of Mrs Stowe's disgusting story than a surgeon has from the examination of a foul disease.

Stripped of the flowery verbiage of the professional novelist (which is peculiarly out of place in bringing a charge which, if made at all, ought to be couched in the simplest and plainest terms), Mrs Stowe's "Story," in its naked hideousness, is as follows:—

That Lord Byron, upon being refused by Miss Milbanke, "fell into the depths of a secret adulterous intrigue" ('Macmillan,' p. 385) with his sister, who was a married woman many years older than himself, with a husband and several children. That, "being filled with remorse and anguish, and an insane dread of detection" (p. 385), he renewed his proposals to Miss Milbanke, and married her with the expectation that she would "be the cloak and accomplice of this infamy" (p. 387). That "the moment the carriage-doors were shut upon the bridegroom and bride" (p. 386), he told her she had "married a *devil*" (p. 386, *etc.*). That, "with all the sophistries of his powerful mind" (p. 387), he tried to persuade her that there was no harm in incest; but that she, "having the soul not only of an angelic woman, but of a strong reasoning man" (p. 388), refused to be convinced.

That from the first hour of her married life until the day they parted,* Lady Byron was "strug-

* Mrs Stowe says "two years." As Lord and Lady Byron lived together only

gling in a series of passionate convulsions to bring her husband back to his better self" (p. 389). That during the whole of this time Lord Byron was, with the knowledge of his wife, who shared bed and board with him, carrying on an incestuous intercourse with his sister, at whose house they visited, and who was a frequent guest at theirs. That two children were born—one the legitimate offspring of the marriage, the other the spurious fruit of the intrigue—over both of whom Lady Byron "watched with a mother's tenderness" (p. 393).

That after "many nameless injuries and cruelties, by which he expressed his hatred of her" (p. 389), he determined to "rid himself of her altogether," and "drove her from him, that he might follow out the guilty infatuation that was consuming him, without being tortured by her imploring face, and by the silent power of her presence and her prayers in his house" (p. 390).

That she left him in company with the "partner of his sins," expressing a devout trust that all three would "meet in heaven" (p. 390), and never saw him more.

Such is the story told by Lady Byron to Mrs Stowe in the year 1856, at an interview which "had almost the solemnity of a death-bed avowal" (p. 395), and when her physicians "had warned her that she had very little time to live" (by the way, she survived the interview for four years). Mrs Stowe adds, that Lady Byron, after thus charging her husband with guilt for which no damnation could be too deep, expressed the fullest confidence in "his salvation," and tells us that, "while speaking on the subject, the pale ethereal face became luminous with a heavenly radiance" (p. 396).

Whether Mrs Stowe means to assert that Lady Byron's communication to her was miraculously at-

tested by one of the signs that accompanied the delivery of the Law on Mount Sinai, or whether this is merely one of those blasphemous familiarities with sacred subjects in which the "unco gude and rigidly righteous" are wont to indulge, to the disgust of all sober-minded people, we must leave the reader to determine.

In the first place, we would ask, Has Mrs Stowe ever considered the effect which her story, if believed, must have upon the reputation, not only of those whom she intentionally maligns, but on that of Lady Byron herself, whose champion she professes to be?

We do not know how far the doctrines with relation to the sexes, which are said to be entertained by a small knot of obscure elderly females in this country, may prevail in America; but we can assure Mrs Stowe that a woman who lived for two years with a husband who to her knowledge was carrying on an incestuous intercourse with his sister, who did not, on the first intimation of such guilt, avoid his touch as the foulest pollution, who did not fly to those whom nature pointed out to her as her protectors, and denounce the monster who had thus profaned the laws of God and polluted the holiest of human ties, would in England be held to be a participant in his crime, and if she sought protection from the law, would be told that she had no right to seek redress for an offence she had condoned; and if, in addition to this, it turned out that she had maintained the outward appearance of the utmost cordiality to the partner of her husband's guilt, that she had received her as a guest, that she had named her child after her, that she had addressed letters to her couched in language of the fondest affection,—we say distinctly that a woman whose moral sense was so perverted would be

one year and thirteen days, the "passionate convulsions" must have extended over the whole period.

held in contempt and abhorrence by every one of her own sex who had not sunk into a state of degradation lower than that of the lowest prostitute that ever haunted the night-houses of the Haymarket. The details of our police-courts show that there are such households as Mrs Stowe would fain persuade us Lady Byron's was ; but they show us, also, that they excite disgust even in the wretched and vicious neighbourhoods in which they exist.

We shall not, however, trouble ourselves with the question whether Mrs Stowe has been guilty of treachery towards Lady Byron. We are not nice as to the morals of an approver, neither are we casuists. Happily the broad lines of duty are sufficiently defined for our guidance in all the ordinary affairs of life. There is, however, one case which sometimes arises upon which men of the most honourable feelings will not unfrequently come to opposite conclusions. We mean the question how far the obligation of secrecy with regard to a confidential communication is binding.

We presume that no one will dispute that if a native of the sister isle, impatient of the delay of the promised Land Bill, were, in the strictest confidence, to impart to us his intention, from the most patriotic motives, to accelerate the adjustment of the question, and the transfer of the land of his country to the inhabitants thereof, by shooting his landlord, it would be our duty not only to warn the intended victim of his danger, but to give information at the nearest police-station, and to do all in our power to bring our confiding friend to the gallows ; yet if that same man had accomplished his purpose, and, when placed on his trial, were to make to his counsel a full avowal of his crime, that counsel would be guilty of the grossest treachery if he betrayed his confession or failed to strain every nerve to obtain his acquittal. Between

these plain extremes there are, however, an infinity of cases which melt into one another like the delicate and imperceptible gradations of an evening sky, and with regard to which it will be difficult to find any two persons who will agree as to the precise line of duty. We think that the error of those—and they have not been few—to whom Lady Byron has at various times told this revolting story, has been in ever permitting themselves to be the recipients of such a confidence. The language they should have held to Lady Byron ought to have been, "What ground have you for making this charge ? What are your proofs ? Have you ever given the persons you accuse the opportunity of answering ? Do they even know that such imputations have been made against them by any one ? Have not you yourself acted towards one or both of them in a manner inconsistent with the truth of what you now say ?" If these questions could not be satisfactorily answered, either the confidence should have been distinctly repudiated, and the accused parties warned of the calumnies, and put on their guard against the danger to which they were exposed, or the statement should have been treated as the raving of a lunatic.

But whatever difference of opinion may exist as to the question of how far Mrs Stowe has been guilty of a breach of confidence towards Lady Byron, we presume there can be none as to the crime against society which she has committed by polluting every household in England and America with the discussion of a subject which ought never to be mentioned without absolute necessity, or the deep culpability of any one who gives such a story to the world without first not only being fully satisfied of its truth, but being prepared with conclusive evidence to prove it. The person who repeats such a tale incurs a responsibility hardly second to that of the inventor. The vendor of

poison is equally guilty with the compounder. Now, what precaution has Mrs Stowe taken to ascertain, before publishing it to the world, whether the horrible tale of which she has become the confidant was a true story, a malignant falsehood, or the phantasm of a diseased brain? Simply—none. It does not appear from her narrative that she ever addressed a single question to her informant, or made any inquiry whatever from any person, before she published a story which must, as she well knew, inflict indescribable agony on the hearts of the living, defile the grave of the dead, and pollute every household in England with its abominations.

One would have supposed that a tale so monstrous, so improbable, so contradictory to all the rules that govern the actions of human beings, unsupported by a single tittle of evidence, would at once have refuted itself, and would not have found a single listener to give it a moment's credence. Such, however, strange to say, is not the case. Some persons have accepted the story; and a duty is thus cast on every man who has a heart to feel indignation at the monstrous wickedness of the calumny, not only on one of England's greatest poets, but still more on the memory of a woman who lived honoured and beloved, and round whose grave affectionate memories have gathered for many years, to come forward and denounce the falsehood with tongue and pen.

It may seem strange that we should have to remind our readers of some of the most elementary principles that govern all inquiries into the truth of facts, whether such inquiries are judicial, historical, or philosophical. Yet the prejudices and passions which have attended upon the subject now under discussion render this necessary.

The first of these principles is, that it is incumbent on the party asserting a fact to prove it, and not on the party denying that fact to dis-

prove it; in other words, the *onus probandi* lies on the prosecutor.

Secondly, In all criminal cases the presumption is in favour of innocence.

Thirdly, When a witness gives two accounts of the same transaction inconsistent with or contradictory to each other, his evidence goes for nothing; for both cannot be true, though both may be false, and there is no preponderance of testimony in favour of either.

Fourthly, If a witness deposes falsely as to the main facts, his evidence is unworthy of belief as to the minor circumstances of the case.

We shall have to apply these principles to the present case, and we beg the reader to keep them in mind.

We have, in the article before alluded to, given our reasons for holding the character of Lord Byron to be a matter of public interest. We cannot agree with those who maintain that the poet may be considered as a separate entity from the man. It would be matter for shame and sorrow were it to be proved that Milton was a time-server, that Cowper was a profligate, that Burns was cold-hearted and ungenerous, or that Scott was not equally remarkable for the virtues of his life as for the brilliancy and extent of his genius. But there is a still deeper interest at stake in this inquiry. The crime alleged necessarily involves the guilt of two persons. It is impossible to sever the charge. Convict Byron, and you equally convict his sister. Acquit one, and you acquit both. The accusation brought against Mrs Leigh concerns every woman who would guard her grave from insult and her memory from slander, when perhaps every tongue that could vindicate her reputation may be cold and silent as her own.

If this kind of treason to society is tolerated, there is no knowing when it will stop. An attempt was once made to soil the fair fame of

Martha Blount, and the offender was deservedly "made manure of for the top of Parnassus" by Byron himself. We may, perhaps, some day be told that Mary Unwin's affection for Cowper was sensual, or that Charles Lamb's life-long devotion to his unhappy sister was criminal, and his heroic self-sacrifice prompted by the foulest motives.

Before entering upon the examination of how far Mrs Stowe may have substantiated her charge, we would remind the reader that the fact of this accusation being the one selected by Lady Byron, conclusively disposes of all the nameless suspicions, even more revolting, which, from her silence, have attached for more than half a century to the name of her husband. We are no longer fighting shadows, which change their form at every moment, like the malignant 'Efreet of the 'Arabian Nights,' who was now a scorpion, then an eagle, afterwards a black cat, and, defeated in every shape, was at last reduced to a heap of filthy ashes. We have emerged into daylight, and have a specific charge to meet. That which Lady Byron denied to the earnest and repeated entreaties of her husband has been granted to us; though the circumstances which attended and motives which prompted it, preclude us from feeling any gratitude for the disclosure.

Some of our readers may perhaps not know accurately who Mrs Leigh was. She was the only child of Captain John Byron (the father of Lord Byron) by his first wife, Baroness Conyers in her own right. After the death of Lady Conyers in 1784, Captain Byron married Miss Catherine Gordon, a relation of the Earl of Huntly, the only child of this second marriage being the celebrated Lord Byron, who was born on the 22d January 1788. As peerages are too polite to record the age of ladies, we are unable to give the precise date of Mrs Leigh's birth; but as her parents were mar-

ried in 1779, and her mother died in January 1784, she must have been born some time between those two dates. She could not be less than four, and we believe was as much as eight, years older than Lord Byron. In August 1807 the Hon. Miss Byron married Col. Leigh of the 10th Hussars. Seven children, born at various intervals between 1808 and 1820, were the fruit of this marriage. Col. Leigh died in May 1850, and Mrs Leigh survived him only a little more than a year, her death taking place in October 1851, after forty-four years of married life, checkered by the sorrows which are the lot of humanity, and of which a more than common number fell to her share. The constant, unvarying, and mutual affection which existed between herself and her husband was known to all her family and friends, and is attested by those who still survive, and whose memory extends to what is now so distant a period. She numbered amongst her friends women eminent alike for their virtues and their rank, amongst the most intimate of whom were the late Countess of Chichester, the venerable Duchess-Dowager of Norfolk, and Lady Gertrude Sloane Stanley. She was cheered through life by the sympathy and affection, and followed to the grave by the respect, of all who knew her. Two of her own children are still living. She was a second mother to those of a friend whose wife died young. In their minds all the holiest associations of childhood are blended with her memory. The accents of her voice and the expression of her countenance, as they lisped their evening prayer at her knee, still come back to their memory with a pure and holy light through the mists and vicissitudes of more than half a century. Is it no crime to have wrung these hearts by proclaiming this loathsome lie of one they loved so well? Is Mrs Stowe so utterly devoid of justice, truth, mercy, and charity, that she greedily

swallowed this filthy tale without one word of inquiry—without doubt or hesitation—without seeking one particle of evidence in its support, and then basely sold it for “thirty pieces of silver”?

Mrs Stowe might perhaps fancy that the lapse of more than half a century, the death of nearly every one of those illustrious men whose friendship for Byron is matter of history, would secure her foul calumny from challenge. Happily this is not so. The age of chivalry is not past. The blood that beat high on the field of Crecy, and that was freely, and, alas! fatally, poured out at the Alma, brooks no concealment, seeks no shield under a *nom de plume*. Mr Delmé Radcliffe, in a letter which he has addressed to the editor of the ‘Daily Telegraph,’ and which does him the highest honour, at once denounced the “True Story” as “a lie—an odious damned lie: upon my soul, a lie—a wicked lie.” Such, he says, “is the burst of indignation with which Emilia repudiates the foul aspersion of Iago on the spotless fame of the gentle Desdemona. Such is the reply to Mrs Stowe on the lips of all to whom the memory of Mrs Leigh is dear; and dear must it be to all who knew her as I did.” Nurtured “under her wing, and having from childhood throughout her lifetime occupied a position little less than that of a son in her family.”

Mrs Stowe has assumed the character, and taken upon herself the duties and responsibilities, of a public prosecutor.

She deliberately arraigns Lord Byron and his sister, Mrs Leigh, at the bar of public opinion, and charges them with the commission of a revolting crime in 1816.

How does she prove her charge? In what mode does she satisfy the first requirement which casts the *onus probandi* upon her?

She says simply that Lady Byron told her so in the year 1856. In the

whole of Mrs Stowe’s “True Story,” which extends over twenty-nine octavo pages, there is not to be found one single fact confirmatory of this assertion. That Mrs Stowe is not the first person to whom Lady Byron has made this astounding statement we well know; that she has repeated it at various times during a period extending over many years, and to several people, cannot be disputed: but Mrs Stowe is the first person, as far as we know, that has undertaken the responsibility of publishing the charge in such a form as that it could be met and answered, and its falsehood demonstrated.

We distinctly challenge any one of Lady Byron’s advocates to produce the slightest particle of evidence in support of her assertion.

Lady Byron, therefore, being the sole witness (if witness she can be called, when her testimony consists of nothing but accusation), let us see how far her conduct has been consistent with her statement.

We must go back to the period of Lady Byron’s marriage in January 1815—and we would here refer our readers to the article which appeared in our July number last year for the events until the month of March following, when Lord and Lady Byron were the guests of Colonel and Mrs Leigh in Cambridgeshire. Whether this was the commencement of the intimacy between Lady Byron and Mrs Leigh, or whether their acquaintance began at an earlier period, we are unable to say; but in the autumn of the same year Lady Byron selected Mrs Leigh as a friend and companion, to be with her during her approaching confinement. It is impossible to suggest stronger evidence than is afforded by this fact, that at that time no suspicion unfavourable to Mrs Leigh could have crossed the mind of Lady Byron. Lady Noel being unavoidably prevented from joining Mrs Leigh in the discharge of this duty, Mrs Clermont (the original of ‘The

Sketch') was sent to supply her place. Lady Byron was confined on the 10th of December. The child was christened shortly afterwards, Mrs Leigh being her god-mother.

Whether Lord Byron was right or not in his suspicions of Mrs Clermont, whether she availed herself of the opportunity afforded by Lady Byron's confinement

"To instil

The angry essence of her deadly will,"

it is impossible to say; but that something had occurred to disturb Lady Byron's peace of mind, and that, whatever that something was, it did not affect her feelings or conduct towards Mrs Leigh, is conclusively shown by the following mysterious letter, which was addressed by Lady Byron to Mrs Leigh in the early part of January, whilst they were both in the same house together : *

"You will think me very foolish; but I have tried two or three times, and cannot talk to you of your departure with a decent visage—so let me say one word in this way, to spare my philosophy. With the expectations which I have I never will nor can ask you to stay one moment longer than you are inclined to do. It would [be] the worst return for all I ever received from you. But in this at least I am 'truth itself,' when I say that whatever the situation may be, there is no one whose society is dearer to me, or can contribute more to my happiness. These feelings will not change under any circumstances, and I should be grieved if you did not understand them. Should you hereafter condemn me, I shall not love you less. I will say no more. Judge for yourself about going or staying. I wish you to consider yourself, if you could be wise enough to do that for the first time in your life.—Thine, A. I. B."

Addressed on the cover "To the Hon. Mrs Leigh."

Lady Byron left London on the 15th of January, and immediately afterwards sent to her husband what is now generally known as the "dear Duck" letter, contemporaneously with which she wrote to Mrs Leigh as follows :—

"KIRBY MALLORY, Jan. 16, 1816.

(The day after she left London.)

"MY DEAREST A.,—It is my great comfort that you are in Piccadilly."

A week afterwards she writes :—

"KIRBY MALLORY, Jan. 23, 1816.

"DEAREST A.,—I know you feel for me as I do for you, and perhaps I am better understood than I think. You have been, ever since I knew you, my best comforter, and will so remain, unless you grow tired of the office, which may well be."

And then in rapid succession came the following letters :—

"Jan. 25, 1816.

"MY DEAREST AUGUSTA,—Shall I still be your sister? I must resign my rights to be so considered; but I don't think that will make any difference in the kindness I have so uniformly experienced from you."

"KIRBY MALLORY, Feb. 3, 1816.

"MY DEAREST AUGUSTA,—You are desired by your brother to ask if my father has acted with my concurrence in proposing a separation. He has. It cannot be supposed that, in my present distressing situation, I am capable of stating in a detailed manner the reasons which will not only justify this measure, but compel me to take it; and it never can be my wish to remember unnecessarily [*sic*] those injuries for which, however deep, I feel no resentment. I will now only recall to Lord Byron's mind his avowed and insurmountable aversion to the married state, and the desire and determination he has expressed ever since its commencement

* As an attempt has been made to cast doubts on the genuineness of these letters, which first appeared in an article in the 'Quarterly Review' of last November, we are glad to have this opportunity of stating, as we are authorised to do, that the first, second, third, and last of the series are vouched for by the Earl of Chichester. The other three letters are derived from a source equally unimpeachable; but as we have not obtained a distinct authority to mention whence they come, we must request the reader for the present to trust to their authenticity on the credit of the well-known writer of that article, of the editor and publisher of the 'Quarterly Review,' and of ourselves.

to free himself from that bondage, as finding it quite insupportable, though candidly acknowledging that no effort of duty or affection has been wanting on my part. He has too painfully convinced me that all these attempts to contribute towards his happiness were wholly useless, and most unwelcome to him. I enclose this letter to my father, wishing it to receive his sanction.—Ever yours most affectionately,

“A. I. BYRON.”

“Feb. 4, 1816.

“I hope, my dear A., that you would on no account withhold from your brother the letter which I sent yesterday, in answer to yours written by his desire; particularly as one which I have received from himself to-day renders it still more important that he should know the contents of that addressed to you.—I am, in haste and not very well, yours most affectionately,

“A. I. BYRON.”

“KIRBY MALLORY, Feb. 14, 1816.

“The present sufferings of all may yet be repaid in blessings. Do not despair absolutely, dearest; and leave me but enough of your interest to afford you any consolation, by partaking of that sorrow which I am most unhappy to cause thus unintentionally. You will be of my opinion hereafter, and at present your bitterest reproach would be forgiven; though Heaven knows you have considered me more than a thousand would have done—more than anything but my affection for B., one most dear to you, could deserve. I must not remember these feelings. Farewell! God bless you from the bottom of my heart.

A. I. B.”

Mrs Leigh remained with her brother in Piccadilly until after the first week in March, when she removed to the rooms in St James's Palace, which she held as one of the ladies attached to the Court of Queen Charlotte. Preparations were being then made for the approaching marriage of the Princess Charlotte. Lord Byron left England about the middle of April. From the day that Lady Byron left her husband under the same roof with his sister, until the day he left his country for ever—a period of more than three months—Lady Byron kept up an uninterrupted intercourse of the most affectionate kind

with Mrs Leigh, not only in the correspondence of which we have given some specimens, but in repeated personal interviews; and subsequently to Lord Byron's departure, the same kind of intercourse, both by letter and personally, in London and during visits in the country, continued up to the time of Lord Byron's death, which occurred in 1824. About two years after that event, Lady Byron introduced a near relative, the present Major Noel, then a young man just going up to Cambridge, to Mrs Leigh, who was living in St James's Palace, and who gave him introductions to her Cambridgeshire friends. We have Major Noel's authority for this anecdote.

We now turn to the statement made by Lady Byron to Lady Anne Barnard—at what period it does not very clearly appear, but certainly within two years after the separation, and communicated by Lord Lindsay to the ‘Times’ in a letter dated 3d September—and what do we find? A totally different charge—not only utterly inconsistent with Mrs Stowe's story, but contradictory to it. The charge made to Lady Anne Barnard was that Lord Byron was in the habit of spending his evenings in “the haunts of vice.” Everybody knows what that means. Lady Byron told Lady Anne Barnard that she “kept his sister” (the very sister against whom this revolting charge is now made) “as much with him as possible,” evidently meaning that she did so as a check upon her husband's alleged profligacy. She expressed astonishment at his avowals of remorse for these alleged transgressions being made “*though his sister was present.*” It is impossible to read Lady Anne Barnard's narrative without seeing that Lady Byron at that time represented Mrs Leigh as exercising a purifying and restraining influence over her brother.

We will not insult the intellect of our readers by adding one word

to this conclusive evidence. It is morally impossible that these letters could have been addressed and this line of conduct pursued by Lady Byron towards a woman whom she believed to have been carrying on an incestuous intercourse with her husband.

Dr Lushington's letter has always been the chief card in the hands of Lady Byron's advocates. It has been supposed that Dr Lushington knew all the circumstances, and by this letter gave his sanction to the whole of Lady Byron's conduct in the affair of the separation. It will be well, therefore, to examine what ground there is for this assumption, what part Dr Lushington played in the transaction, and what his letter really was.

Dr Lushington was Lady Byron's counsel. He was first consulted after Lady Byron had left London in January 1816. He says, "I was originally consulted by Lady Noel on your behalf whilst you were in the country."*

Lady Byron states that she had empowered her mother to take *legal opinions* on a written statement drawn up by herself.†

Lady Noel upon this consulted Dr Lushington, then a young advocate rising into practice. We do not know the exact age of the venerable lawyer; but as these events occurred fifty-three years ago, and he still happily survives, we may fairly reckon that he was not at this time much above five-and-thirty years of age, which at the bar is considered young. The advice which he gave was that a reconciliation was practicable, and this was accompanied by an offer of his assistance towards effecting that object. Lady Noel left, hav-

ing received this very judicious advice. A fortnight passed, and then Lady Byron in person sought an interview with Dr Lushington. Then says Dr Lushington: "I was for the first time informed by you of facts utterly unknown, as I have no doubt, to Sir Ralph and Lady Noel. On receiving this information, my opinion was entirely changed; I considered a reconciliation impossible. I declared my opinion, and added that, if such an idea should be entertained, I could not, either professionally or otherwise, take any part towards effecting it." Such are Dr Lushington's words in a letter written in 1830, in reply to a request from Lady Byron that he would state what he recollected of the circumstances attending her consultation with him.

It is a trite saying, that the opinion is worth nothing without the case. Till we know what Lady Byron told Dr Lushington, it is impossible that we should estimate the value of the advice she received. As to this, Dr Lushington has hitherto observed the most profound silence. No rumour has ever reached the outer world as to what this secret communication was that could be traced to him. Whether he will consider that the chain of professional confidence still binds his tongue we know not, but until he gives utterance we are driven to an analysis of such facts as are in our possession to assist us in arriving at a conclusion as to what that communication was. Lady Byron, at various times, and ultimately to Mrs Stowe, has unquestionably asserted that incest with his sister was the cause of her separation from her husband. Did she state

* Life of Byron, p. 662. In a note to "Don Juan," canto i. st. xxvii, a parenthesis is filled up with the name of Dr Lushington where Lord Byron had evidently merely said "a lawyer." It is but justice to Dr Lushington to point out the error committed in attributing to him the very unprofessional act there alluded to. Dr Lushington's own letter is conclusive that he was not the person who so misconducted himself.

† Lady Byron's Remarks; Life of Byron, p. 662.

this, or some other reason, to Dr Lushington in 1816 as the ground of her determination to separate from her husband? If she stated that this was the cause, her letters written to Mrs Leigh at the very same time, her statement made to Lady Anne Barnard immediately afterwards, and her whole course of conduct subsequently, prove, incontestably, either that she was stating to Dr Lushington what she knew to be false, or that she was guilty of an amount of duplicity which is not only wholly incredible, but which, if it could be believed, would deprive her of all right to be treated as a witness worthy of belief.

On the other hand, if she assigned a different cause to Dr Lushington, she either spoke falsely to him, or she has spoken falsely to Mrs Stowe and her other confidants. From one horn or the other of this dilemma escape is impossible. Each is equally destructive of all reliance on Lady Byron's testimony. Which is most disgraceful it is difficult to say. Mistake in this case is impossible. Mrs Stowe may have embellished Lady Byron's narrative, but that incest committed with Mrs Leigh during the period of Lady Byron's cohabitation with her husband, known at that period to Lady Byron to have been so committed, was asserted by Lady Byron to have been the cause and justification of the separation, there can be no doubt.

Lady Byron has unquestionably told this story to other persons besides Mrs Stowe, though at what period she began to do so we are unable to state with accuracy; and we see no valid ground for supposing that she told any other to Dr Lushington. It is amply sufficient to account for his change of opinion; and that being so, we think we should not be justified on mere conjecture in suspecting Lady Byron of the complicated and improbable guilt of having given birth to another fabrication equally as

monstrous as that with which Mrs Stowe has disgusted the world.

We do not assert with any confidence that this is so. In treading on a soil so fertile in mendacity, we may easily lose our way in a thicket of falsehoods, but the most simple solution seems to us to be the following:—

Lady Byron, we doubt not, told her mother that her husband had been guilty of infidelity, and told her no more. Dr Lushington, upon receiving this statement from Lady Noel, gave the advice which any one but a pettifogging lawyer who sought to inflame a quarrel would give under such circumstances.

Lady Byron, then, relying, as the result has proved she might safely rely, on Dr Lushington's secrecy, makes the damning addition that the partner of his guilt was his sister. It may naturally occur to the reader to ask, Why did not Dr Lushington require proof of the truth of Lady Byron's statement before giving his opinion on it? The answer is obvious to any professional man. Dr Lushington was asked for his opinion on a given statement of facts. Lady Byron was responsible for the truth of those facts, not Dr Lushington. He was not asked, Are such and such circumstances sufficient to warrant me in coming to the conclusion that my husband has been guilty of such a crime? but, Assuming that he has committed it, am I required any longer to continue cohabitation with him? Dr Lushington, as Lady Byron's counsel, was bound to receive her statement, and might well believe that she would not make so revolting a charge without conclusive proofs to support it, into which it was not his duty to inquire.

Who could suppose that at the very time that Lady Byron was making this horrible charge against Mrs Leigh in the secrecy of Dr Lushington's chambers, she was addressing her as her "dearest

Augusta," telling her that it was her "great comfort" that she was in Piccadilly with her brother, imploring her still to consider her "as a sister," and "blessing her from the bottom of her heart"!! Yet such is the fact. Having attained her object, she preserved the most obdurate silence for a time. When Lord Byron was dead, when his Memoirs were burned, she began to whisper into willing and credulous ears the malignant calumny which has been crawling about the world for years, like some loathsome reptile, until at last it has blundered into daylight only to be crushed.

This appears to us to be the hypothesis most consistent with all the known facts of the case. We do not deny that it is possible that the same mind which produced this wicked fabrication may have given birth to another as foul and unnatural; but until Dr Lushington breaks silence, or we have something more in support of such a suggestion than the vaguest conjecture, we shall adhere to the belief that Lady Byron told Dr Lushington in 1816 the same story in its main facts that she told Mrs Stowe in 1856.

It has been frequently urged that Lord Byron's repeated assertion, that he was ignorant of what was imputed to him, must have been false; and it is argued that, had he not been conscious of some deep criminality, he would have sought to compel Lady Byron's return to his bed by instituting a suit for the restoration of conjugal rights. There are two answers to this argument. In the first place, the enforcement of the legal rights of a husband upon the person of a reluctant wife by the strong arm of the law is a proceeding revolting to the mind of every man who has risen above the rank of a savage. The suggestion even of a resort to such a course is worthy of a Hotentot. Secondly, it is not impossible that Byron might be conscious

of such irregularities as would have barred such a suit; and it must be remembered that any transgression of this kind, though it might be such as even the stern moralist Johnson declared it was a wife's duty to forgive, would have been sufficient for that purpose.

The present discussion has happily brought to light two pieces of evidence which put the question of Lord Byron's sincerity beyond the possibility of doubt. At the time of the separation, Lord Broughton, then Mr Hobhouse, acted as Lord Byron's friend; Mr Wilmot Horton, and, if we are not mistaken, the late Sir Francis Doyle, acting for Lady Byron. The following memorandum from a lady of a conversation with Lord Broughton has been furnished by Lord Lindsay, who thus makes himself responsible for its genuineness, to the 'Times':—

"Six or seven years ago, when Lord Broughton's remarkable memory was as good as ever, he said to me most earnestly, 'Mrs —, when I was appointed (or desired) by Byron to examine matters with Lady Byron's friends, I wrote down every vice, and sin, and crime, and horror, in short, of which a human being can be capable; and I said, "Now I shall not stir in this business till you tell me whether you accuse him of any of these things, and which of them it is." And the answer was, "*It is none of these things.*" Then I said, "What is it?" But they never would say.'

"After a pause, Lord Broughton continued: 'I said to Byron, "Byron! what is it?" He said, "I give you my word I don't know (or, I know no more than you do)." I said, "Have you ever been unkind or harsh to her?" He said, "Only once, and I'll tell you about it. One day in the middle of my trouble" ('money trouble' he meant,' said Lord Broughton), "I came into the room and went up to the fire; she was standing before it, and said, 'Am I in your way?' I answered, 'Yes, you are!' with emphasis. She burst into tears, and left the room. I hopped up-stairs as quickly as I could" ('Poor fellow!' said Lord Broughton, 'you know how lame he was') "and begged her pardon most humbly; and that was

the only time I spoke really harshly to her."

"Lord Broughton laid great stress on the words most humbly. He spoke of Lord Byron with pity and tenderness, and evidently believed in what he told him."

We have ourselves received the same account, in all its material facts, from Lord Broughton through a channel of the highest and most unimpeachable character. Indeed he made no secret either of his own inability to obtain any specific charge, or of his perfect belief in Lord Byron's sincerity. But the evidence does not stop here. Mr Murray, the son and successor of Lord Byron's friend and publisher, has given to the public a more formal and absolutely conclusive testimony to the fact.

"The following document is printed as a contribution to literary history. It was drawn up by Lord Byron in August 1817, while Mr Hobhouse was staying with him at La Mira, near Venice, and given to Mr Matthew Gregory Lewis for circulation among friends in England. It was found amongst Mr Lewis's papers after his death, and is now in the possession of Mr Murray.

"The document speaks for itself sufficiently to need no comment on our part.

"It has been intimated to me, that the persons understood to be the legal advisers of Lady Byron have declared 'their lips to be sealed up' on the cause of the separation between her and myself. If their lips are sealed up, they are not sealed up by me, and the greatest favour they can confer upon me will be to open them. From the first hour in which I was apprised of the intentions of the Noel family to the last communication between Lady Byron and myself in the character of wife and husband (a period of some months) I called repeatedly and in vain for a statement of their or her charges, and it was chiefly in consequence of Lady Byron's claiming (in a letter still existing) a promise on my part to consent to a separation if such was really her wish, that I consented at all; this claim, and the exasperating and inexplicable manner in which their object was pursued, which rendered it next to an impossibility that two persons so divided could ever be reunited, induced me reluctantly then, and

repentantly still, to sign the deed, which I shall be happy—most happy—to cancel, and go before any tribunal which may discuss the business in the most public manner.

"Mr Hobhouse made this proposition on my part—viz., to abrogate all prior intentions, and go into Court—the very day before the separation was signed, and it was declined by the other party, as also the publication of the correspondence during the previous discussion. Those propositions I beg here to repeat, and to call upon her and hers to say their worst, pledging myself to meet their allegations—whatever they may be—and only too happy to be informed at last of their real nature.

(Signed) "BYRON.

"August 9, 1817.

"P.S.—I have been, and am now, utterly ignorant of what description her allegations, charges, or whatever name they may have assumed, are; and am as little aware for what purpose they have been kept back—unless it was to sanction the most infamous calumnies by silence.

(Signed) "BYRON.

"La Mira, near Venice."

The attempts that have been made to obtain confirmation of Mrs Stowe's story by identifying Lord Byron with Manfred are too childish to deserve a serious answer. Did anybody ever charge on Massinger the crimes of Mallefort, or on Otway the abominations of Polydore? It may be well for the memory of Shakespeare that his wife survived him, and that the critics have been left to contend amongst themselves whether his bequest to her of his "second-best bed" was a studied insult, implying that some one else had shared the best, or whether it was an indication of tender affection, that particular piece of furniture being endeared to him by the recollection of the chaste loves of their early life; otherwise some wiseacres might have identified him with Othello, with just as good ground as it is now sought to identify Byron with Manfred.

It remains to say a few words

on the most culpable recklessness that Mrs Stowe has shown in making assertions which a reference to the most ordinary authority would have shown her were altogether erroneous.

We will select a few examples:—

At p. 389 she speaks of Lady Byron's married life as extending over a period of "two years."

The marriage took place on the 2d January 1815; Lady Byron left her home on the 15th January 1816—*exactly one year and thirteen days* after her marriage.

At page 394 she speaks of the "few years" after Lord Byron's death, during which "the life of this frail delicate creature" (Lady Byron) "upon earth was a miracle of mingled weakness and strength."

Lord Byron died in 1824, and Lady Byron in 1860, so that the "few years" of her widowhood were thirty-six—*exactly equal to the whole life of her husband!*

At page 393 Mrs Stowe asserts that Lady Byron's daughter "married a man of fashion, and ran a brilliant course as a gay woman of fashion." The husband of Lady Byron's daughter is well known as a man of extensive reading, fond of literary and scientific inquiries, and of the society of men eminent in such pursuits. He would probably smile at finding a character ascribed to him which he has certainly never publicly shown any ambition of assuming. Perhaps a similarity of name may have led Mrs Stowe to confound the Earl of Lovelace with the hero of Richardson's famous novel.

At page 389 Mrs Stowe says that "Moore tells us that about this time" (i.e., shortly before the separation) "Byron was often drunk day after day with Sheridan."

Moore tells us nothing of the kind. The only shadow of foundation for this reckless assertion is a letter from Byron to Moore, dated Oct. 31, 1815, in which he gives an account of a party at which Sheridan got drunk, and Douglas

Kinnaird and Byron had to conduct him "down a d—d corkscrew staircase, which had certainly been constructed before the discovery of fermented liquors, and to which no legs, however crooked, could possibly accommodate themselves." "We deposited him," says Lord Byron, "safe at home, where his man, evidently used to the business, waited to receive him in the hall." Pretty good proof that, though Sheridan *was*, Byron *was not*, drunk, even though he "carried away much wine," and "his last hour or so was all hiccup and happiness."

The slightest care, or reference to the commonest authorities, would have prevented these misstatements, had there been any desire on the part of Mrs Stowe to observe truth or accuracy. But far worse is the garbling of the account of the deathbed of Lord Byron, and of his last words to his faithful servant, Fletcher. Mrs Stowe must have had the only authentic account (that given by Parry, and printed in Moore's 'Life of Byron') before her; and it is impossible to account for the *suggestio falsi*, no less than the *suppressio veri*, of which she has been guilty, except on the ground of wilful and deliberate falsehood.

We now come to the consideration of the second count of Mrs Stowe's indictment; or, in other words, having disposed of the felony, we may proceed to inquire into the misdemeanour.

The charge now shapes itself as follows: That having married Miss Milbanke, in the hope that she would be "the cloak and accomplice" of an abominable crime, Lord Byron forthwith, even between the solemnisation and the consummation of their union, began to treat her with the vulgar brutality of a drunken costermonger, and continued that course of conduct up to the time of their separation.

Here again Lady Byron is the only witness. What is her testi-

mony worth? First, let us apply the fourth principle which we have laid down. We have shown conclusively that her evidence is utterly unworthy of belief as to the principal charge. It follows that it is equally worthless to establish the minor offence. It is not to be expected that after the lapse of fifty-three years, living testimony should be at hand to show on what terms a particular married couple lived with each other; yet it does happen that in this case there is even at this period sufficient to show the absurdity of the charge.

The marriage took place on the 2d January. After spending about three weeks at Halmaby, Lord and Lady Byron returned to Seaham, where they remained until the 9th of March with Sir Ralph and Lady Noel. It was during this time that Lord Byron wrote the letters which we quoted in a former article, and which negative in the clearest manner the idea of any discomfort having existed at that time. We distinctly challenge the advocates of Lady Byron to produce a single particle of contemporaneous evidence from her correspondence to the contrary. The ridiculous story which Mrs Stowe quotes from another scandalous female pen, of Lady Byron having alighted from the carriage on her wedding-day "with a countenance and frame agonised and listless with evident horror and despair," has been distinctly negated by her own maid, who was with her, who is still living, and who, though she certainly entertains no friendly feeling towards Lord Byron, states that she saw the bride alight from the carriage "buoyant and happy as a bride should be."

Thackeray has often remarked on the ordeal which a man has to undergo from the inquisitor who stands behind his chair at dinner and the jury who sit upon his character in the servants' hall. Mrs Stowe's "True Story" has aroused one of these keen ob-

servers to denounce its falsehood. Mr William Child, who has addressed a letter to the editor of the 'Daily Telegraph,' was a servant at Newstead, where his aunt was housekeeper from the year 1800 until Lord Byron sold the estate, when he continued in the service of Colonel Wildman as gamekeeper. He has exchanged the perilous duty of maintaining nightly combats with the poachers of Nottingham, in the wilds of Sherwood Forest, for the more peaceful occupation of representing the majesty of the law, and striking terror into the souls of unruly urchins in Golden Square, where he enjoys an old age which is "like a lusty winter, frosty but kindly."

We have ourselves conversed with this "honest chronicler," and can bear witness to the indignation with which he repudiates the slanders on his master, and the warmth and earnestness with which he expatiates on his generosity and kindness to every one around him (including the dumb animals which formed a part of his establishment), and every quality the very reverse of what Mrs Stowe would have us believe constituted his character. It is well worthy of note also, as confirming the peculiar weakness of Byron (a weakness which he shared with many, and amongst them with one of the best men and best judges that ever adorned the English Bench) to indulge in the "fanfaronnade des vices qu'il n'avait pas," that he utterly denies the debaucheries of which Newstead is supposed to have been the scene, and which are so vividly portrayed in the opening stanzas of "Childe Harold," but which he declares had no existence except in the imagination of the poet.

When Dr Ireland, the Dean of Westminster, and annotator of Massinger, refused to admit the statue of Byron, which now adorns the library of Trinity College, to the sanctuary of the Abbey, on the ground that the poet was too

impure and profane to be fit company for Dryden and Congreve; and when the Bishop of London backed the intolerance of the Dean in defiance of the protest of hundreds, amongst whom were men eminent no less for their spotless character than for their brilliant abilities and high position—of Scott, of Peel, of Rogers, Campbell, Moore, Brougham, Denman, Macintosh, Jeffrey, Lockhart, the Dukes of Bedford and Devonshire, and many more—the late Lord Broughton, then Sir John Cam Hobhouse, in a few eloquent and indignant pages, gave expression to the feelings of indignation which such a display of narrowness and bigotry was well calculated to excite. Now if any man was qualified to judge fairly of the character of Lord Byron, Lord Broughton was that man. He was the chosen comrade of his youth, the companion of his early travel, the associate of his short and brilliant career of popularity, and his steadfast friend when the tide turned and the unreasoning world sought to overwhelm him with obloquy. Upon Lord Broughton's own character, public or private, no breath of slander has ever rested. He was a keen and experienced observer of men. He writes, not in the fervour of youth or under the impulse of feelings excited by a recent event, but at the mature age of fifty-eight, and when twenty years had passed since the death of Lord Byron, and, be it remembered, with a full knowledge of the contents of the suppressed memoirs; and here is his testimony to what he was:—

"Lord Byron had hard measure dealt to him in his lifetime, but he did not die without leaving behind him friends—deeply and affectionately attached friends—whom the bishop himself would despise if they suffered this attack to pass unnoticed. Those friends, however, do not prefer their late much-loved associate to truth—they would not sacrifice the best interests of society at the shrine even of his surpassing fame. They were not blind to the defects of his character,

VOL. CVIL.—NO. DCLI.

nor of his writings, but they know that some of the gravest accusations levelled against him had no foundation in fact; and perhaps the time may come when justice may be done to the dead without injury to the feelings of the living. Even now it may be permitted to say something of him, and it will be said by one who perhaps knew him as well as he was known by any human being.

"Lord Byron had failings—many failings, certainly—but he was untainted with any of the baser vices; and his virtues—his good qualities—were all of the higher order. He was honourable and open in all his dealings; he was generous, and he was kind. He was affected by the distress, and, rarer still, he was pleased with the prosperity of others. Tender-hearted he was to a degree not usual with our sex, and he shrunk with feminine sensibility from the sight of cruelty. He was true-spoken—he was affectionate—he was very brave, if that be any praise; but his courage was not the effect of physical coolness or indifference to danger; on the contrary, he entertained apprehensions and adopted precautions, of which he made no secret and was by no means ashamed. His calmness and presence of mind in the hour of peril were the offspring of reflection, and of a fixed resolution to act becomingly and well. He was alive to every indication of good feeling in others—a generous or noble sentiment, a trait of tenderness or devotion, not only in real but in imaginary characters, affected him deeply—even to tears. He was, both by his habits and his nature, incapable of any mean compliance, any undue submission towards those who command reverence and exact flattery from men of the highest genius; and it will be the eternal praise of his writings, as it was one of the merits of his conversation, that he threw no lustre on any exploit, however brilliant, any character, however exalted, which had not contributed to the happiness or welfare of mankind.

"Lord Byron was totally free from envy and from jealousy, and, both in public and in private, spoke of the literary merits of his contemporaries in terms which did justice to them and honour to himself. He was well aware of his own great reputation; but he was neither vainglorious nor overbearing, nor attached to his productions even that value which was universally granted to them, and which they will probably for ever maintain.

"Of his lesser qualities very little

K

need be said, because his most inveterate detractors have done justice to his powers of pleasing, and to the irresistible charm of his general deportment. There was indeed something about him not to be definitely described, but almost universally felt, which captivated those around him, and impressed them, in spite of occasional distrust, with an attachment not only friendly, but fixed. Part of this fascination may doubtless be ascribed to the entire self-abandonment, the incautions, it may be said the dangerous, sincerity of his private conversation; but his very weaknesses were amiable, and, as has been said of a portion of his virtues, were of a feminine character—so that the affection felt for him was as that for a favourite and sometimes froward sister.

"In mixed society Lord Byron was not talkative, neither did he attempt to surprise by pointed or by humorous remarks; but in all companies he held his own, and that, too, without unbecoming rivalry with his seniors in age and reputation, and without any offensive condescension towards his inferior associates. In more familiar intercourse he was a gay companion and a free, but never transgressed the bounds of good-breeding even for a moment. Indeed he was, in the best sense of the word, a gentleman."—"Remarks on the Exclusion of Lord Byron's Monument from Westminster Abbey," p. 42.

To add to this testimony would be but to weaken its effect. Such was Lord Byron. The time (anticipated by Lord Broughton) when justice could be done to the dead has arrived, though in a mode that could little be expected. The attempt to give form and substance

to the foul calumnies which have for half a century been floating about the world against Lord Byron has ended in their complete and triumphant refutation. The character of Mrs Leigh stands forth pure and unsullied. As to Mrs Stowe, one universal cry of indignation has arisen on both sides of the Atlantic. All who glory in the fame of Byron—all who revere the memory of Mrs Leigh—all, and they were not few, who were attached by the ties of friendship to Lady Byron herself—all who would guard the purity of home from pollution, and the sanctity of the grave from outrage—have joined in one unanimous chorus of condemnation. With regard to Lady Byron, who shall read the riddle which her conduct now presents? Did she believe the hideous tale she told? Was she the wilful fabricator of the monstrous calumny, or was she herself the victim of insane delusions? Is her memory to be regarded with the deepest abhorrence or the most profound compassion? These are questions to which it is impossible at present to give a satisfactory answer. It may be that the reply is to be found amongst the papers left behind by herself. Whether those to whom they are intrusted will make them public we know not. Till then, though the questions most interesting to the public are set at rest for ever, the "Byron mystery" is not completely solved.

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FEBRUARY 1870.

Vol. CVII.

CONTENTS.

UNIVERSITY TESTS,	139
EARL'S DENIAL—PART IV.,	161
THE OPENING OF THE SUEZ CANAL—PART II.,	179
JOHN.—PART IV.,	198
DEMOCRACY BEYOND THE SEAS,	220
CORNELIUS O'DOWD—	237
WORDS WITHOUT MUSIC.	
WHO'S AFRAID?	
NEW MEASURES AND OLD MEN.	
TALK—"GAMBITS."	
A SMALL CLERICAL ERROR.	
THE COMING SESSION,	250
UPON THE EMPLOYMENT OF RHYMED VERSE IN ENGLISH COMEDY,	264
POSTSCRIPT TO "LORD BYRON AND HIS CALUMNIATORS,"	267

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UNIVERSITY TESTS.

THE question of University tests has fairly come on for settlement. One particular solution of the problem has on repeated occasions been accepted by the House of Commons; and that fact by itself alone shows that the action of the whole Legislature cannot now be distant. Movements within the Universities themselves are accelerating its progress. To use a Spanish word, pronunciamientos have taken place at Cambridge and Oxford, which indicate great internal fermentation within these academical bodies. Deputations to the Prime Minister have issued from this agitation; and in an age like the present, such events cannot occur without engendering very speedily an Act of Parliament. The question, moreover, possesses surpassing interest. It raises discussions of the first magnitude. It appeals to principles among the most powerful which can determine the conduct of nations. It directly sets in motion the inquiry into the relation which the Christian religion possesses towards the civil world. It puts questions as to the relative rights of the several Christian communi-

ties towards each other; it seeks to know whether the State is authorised to select one of these religious societies, and to confer on it social advantages above the rest. Still more, the matter of the University tests moots the very first principles of political philosophy. We know of no question of the present hour which leads so immediately to the inquiry, What are the foundations on which the action of the State rests; what the rights and the limits, both of the governors and the governed, which ought to determine the relations which should subsist between the several classes of society? The determination ultimately to be reached on University tests must, above all things, flow from the nature of the principles which are supposed to be laid down by political philosophy. The decision, apart from its religious elements, will take one shape or another very much according to the ideas entertained of the duties and the rights of the State—that is, of the very foundations themselves of those doctrines which constitute political philosophy.

It is hardly possible, therefore, for a subject to be more fitted to excite universal interest, as assuredly there can scarcely be one which has more important bearings on most departments of our social life. It cannot be settled in any way except upon an enunciation of first principles. Any Act of Parliament which may be passed respecting it must of itself be a declaration of first principles. But unfortunately it is also a subject on which the enlightenment of the public that discusses it falls far below the magnitude of the issue raised. Whatever is done must be an act embodying principles of extreme significance, and pregnant with vast consequences in the future; yet how many of those who speak and write about this matter exhibit the care which a consciousness of its magnitude would be sure to enforce? The public at large understands very little of the issues involved in this great question. Sonorous principles of great range are poured forth with much confidence, and circulate triumphantly from mouth to mouth; yet few have taken the pains to ascertain on what evidence these wide sweeping assertions are founded. The state of the Universities and the changes which they require are the favourite field in which the new political philosophy delights to roam. The general condition of the whole country is a more sterile and unprofitable region for the new intellectual lights; it is a land of conflicting interests, of forces which cannot be entirely overcome, and consequently of compromise. The rights of manhood, the veto of a minority on public action, cannot, in the present political world, be either theoretically sustained, or, still less, carried into practice. But it is otherwise with the Universities. Here the pure doctrines of abstract right can be revelled in, and political principles may pass instantly into the broadest revolution. And how great is the delight

of enunciating an unlimited principle, and then demolishing with its powerful lever the accumulated rubbish of centuries! No wonder that no one attempts to establish by proof such grave and powerful propositions; they carry their own evidence on their front. To try to prove them would be an insult to truths which shine with such overwhelming luminousness; and then it would spoil so much pleasant satisfaction. Meanwhile the unwary public is misled. It is supplied with much sound, but no investigation. It is enough that what is disliked should be howled at; that is proof sufficient that it is worthless, fit only to be destroyed. Under such circumstances it is supremely important to call on the good sense of the nation to look carefully into this great question before any irretrievable act shall have consummated ruin. The Universities have rendered incalculable service to the people of England during many centuries in the past, and they are full of vitality in the present. They are neither effete nor out of date; the very effort to remould them is an act of homage to their power. The ambition of the innovators is to wield their force to their own ends. The Universities are known to be strong in moulding the minds and natures of the young men of England; the object sought is to employ this strength as an instrument to promote designs which are not academical. There are men who desire to destroy the aristocracy or the British Constitution; but here the end pursued is not the destruction of the Universities, but the application of their vast influence to diffuse certain ideas and principles over the whole English society. We do not say that these men are to be blamed for pursuing such an object; from their point of view they are justified in proposing what they hold will be beneficial to the world. But just in proportion as the consequences must be vast

if they succeed in their design, circumspection and thorough previous examination before action is commenced are imperatively demanded in the interest of all.

Let us now, at the outset, lay down the principle on which we propose to examine this very serious question. We stand on the ground of expediency, and expediency alone. We shall not assume the truth of Christianity as a religion, nor insist on any dogma as a true interpretation of its teaching. We shall not say a word, as Mr Gladstone once did, on the duty of the State to profess and support the true religion. For the purposes of this discussion, we are content to place Christianity, as to its claims to recognition, on the same level with other religions. We shall take public policy for our basis, the policy of expediency, the rule of the general good, on a balance of the considerations for and against any measure that may be proposed. Assuredly we shall refuse to regard a round assertion, a general sentence of dislike and condemnation, as a self-obvious truth or the necessary exponent of expediency. We shall demand proof of the utility of such a principle, of its ability to promote the public good, of its effects on the whole community, and will think little about its conformity with the taste and ideas of particular persons. The Universities are national institutions, we cheerfully grant; their continuance and the form of their existence, we entirely admit, must be justified by a demonstration built on public policy and national expediency. If any part of their constitution cannot be defended on this ground, we shall make no objection against its removal. We ask for no favour, no respect for old ideas merely because they are old and have been beneficial in their day; but neither, on the other hand, will we yield to formulas as absolute and as peremptory as M. Proudhon's dictum, *La propriété c'est le vol*. Nor will we

accept reasoning of the quality that "All tests are odious; therefore the Universities must know nothing about religion."

And now, what are the facts with which we have to deal in this question of the Universities? They originated in days when the whole nation professed the Roman Catholic religion; and they were founded for the purpose of educating the young, both for the priesthood and for other professions. The teachers who were to carry on this work were clergymen, as a matter of course; for there were no literary classes in those ages except the clergy. No question about the propriety of tests could then arise; for every citizen was assumed to be a Christian. These institutions received public privileges from the State: they were incorporated as public bodies, and were empowered to confer degrees, whatever might be the value belonging to such honours. They do not appear to have received large endowments of money from the State; but, as all the world knows, they obtained very ample benefactions from private persons. These benefactions were indisputably private and personal gifts, bestowed on trusts of precisely the same nature with the endowments given to grammar-schools and other educational bodies all over the country. The State unanimously judged such institutions to be wise and beneficial: it encouraged them with all its power and influence. No one in those days challenged their expediency; if ever institutions rested on universal suffrage, it has been the Universities, and Universities such as they were in the middle ages. Then came the Reformation, and a very decisive change, pregnant with political principle, occurred. The Universities were continued on the same general footing; but the profession of the Roman Catholic religion was suppressed, and the endowments absolutely taken away from the members of that Church. It cannot be

disputed that most of these endowments had their root in Roman Catholic ideas—that the giving of them was most frequently an act of religion—a deed done in the name of the Roman Catholic faith—and that but for those ideas these gifts would never have had any existence at all. Thus they were alienated by the act of the State from the very purposes for which they had been bestowed. The question arises, Was the State justified in this appropriation of their funds to objects which not only were diverse from those contemplated by the donors, but which we know would have been regarded by them as in the highest degree mischievous and detestable? To this question scarcely a man in our day would hesitate to declare that the State was justified in the course which it adopted.

No single generation can possibly acquire the right of prescribing its mode of life to posterity. If any of its arrangements are respected, acquiescence is given, not because ancestors—dead men—possessed a right of dictating to those that came after, but because the interests of society advise compliance with their regulations. To assert that owners of property in the past are endowed with an indefeasible right of perpetuating opinions or teachings or social arrangements which are rejected by the convictions of their successors, is to utter an absurdity and an impossibility. The world cannot belong to the dead: it belongs to the living. The State thus becomes an implied trustee to every abiding endowment: it cannot help from time to time revising the trust. Whether the State in repudiating Roman Catholicism acted judiciously with funds devoted to Roman Catholic purposes is fairly open to inquiry, but its power and its duty to revise and remodel are unchallengeable.

The principle which we thus acquire reaches far, and covers the demand for every kind of University reform which is demanded in

our day. We do not repel the right and authority of the State to alter any part of the academical constitution. What we insist upon on our side is, that the wisdom and expediency of the changes suggested should be demonstrated. When the State ceased to be Roman Catholic, it manifestly could not allow its two Universities to remain in the hands of the teachers of that religion. It transferred them and all their endowments to the Church of England then established. It was inevitable that it should adopt such a measure in that age. Toleration had not made its appearance in the world: every man was held to belong to the Established Church, as he formerly had belonged to the Roman Church. In this manner the Universities, in respect of religion, had, as it were, a second origin. They were made Church of England institutions, and they have continued to be such for more than three centuries. The change was irreproachable at that time on the score of expediency: no one disputed the public policy of the transformation.

The religious element of the Universities has now developed a new phase. The demand now is that they should be officially disconnected with religion—that no particular form of religion shall be recognised in respect either of University functions or collegiate endowments—that every religion shall stand on the same academical level—and that no inquiry into a man's religion shall ever be made either under the authority of the University or the statutes of any College. This is a complete innovation, it cannot be denied, in the constitution of these bodies. No precedent can be cited in support of such a change from the long history of the Universities. Undergraduates, it is true, were recently exempted from professing the faith of the Church of England; but then they were mere learners, and no very good reason could be shown

why youths of any kind should not be admitted to the teaching contained in the system of the Universities. That the alteration, however, should be unprecedented, is no proof that it is unreasonable, though the fact may justify a more rigorous requirement of proof. What reasons, then, are assigned for disconnecting all religion with the official character of not only the Universities, but of their Colleges also? Religion has always formed a most prominent—nay, the most prominent—part of their system during a long lapse of ages. In what name, and upon what principle, is so immense a revolution demanded? Is it alleged that religion is a bad thing—an exploded fiction, a worn-out device—fit only to be consigned to the limbo of things exhausted? We can find no one making such an assertion. We can discover no English parent requiring that his son shall not be taught any religion. The regard for religion, for the Christian religion, does not appear to have diminished throughout the country. If the families of the English parents of the middle and upper classes were polled, we should be greatly astonished to find any considerable number expressing a positive wish that their children should not be educated in the general doctrines of the Christian religion. It is not a commotion of such a kind in this quarter which gives this violent impulse to the requirement, that the Universities, officially, should ignore religion. Yet it is true that a considerable number of persons who have no desire to sweep away religion are supporting this cry; but though they abet the demand for the separation of religion from the public life of the Universities, it is in the name of religious rights, and under the impulse of wounded religious feeling, that they adopt a course apparently so contradictory. These persons constitute a class which has sprung up since the Reformation—the Dis-

senters, the Christian Nonconformists—and they and their claims are the force which has given its chief strength to the movement for repealing tests at the Universities. They demand admission into these bodies, and a share in their privileges and emoluments. They deny that their exclusion can be justified by any valid reason: in other words, their claim amounts to a plea that the Universities and their advantages shall not be restricted to members of the Church of England. They impugn the settlement made at the Reformation as being no longer applicable at the present day; they point to the altered circumstances of the nation in religious matters, and they repudiate an arrangement, which did not, at the time when it was made, but does now, confer an exclusive monopoly of academical privileges on a particular Church. Unfortunately the Christian Nonconformists are not the only persons who agitate for the repeal of religious tests, though they make up the rank and file of the attacking hosts. However, we must consider their case separately, for the mixing up together of all kinds of ideas and claims is the most fruitful cause of the want of clear intelligence which distinguishes the agitation which rolls against University tests. Are, then, the Dissenters entitled, on grounds of expediency and public policy, to free access to University privileges and endowments? In other words, ought these advantages to be strictly confined to members of the Church of England in the actual circumstances of our time? Stated in this form, the question, we cannot doubt, will receive but one reply from the majority of the people. The Dissenters neither can nor ought to be excluded from the Universities. Their aggregate numbers approach too much to equality with those of the Established Church to admit of their permanent privation of the benefits of the Universities.

Their political power, moreover, would be decisive of the matter, if it were otherwise exposed to doubt. Nor—which is the capital point—does their admission violate any important principle, either of religion or civil polity. They are Christians; they profess the Christian faith, with many and important variations in detail, it cannot be denied—still it is the Christian faith. They all hold fundamental truths of Christian morals and of Christian belief. The points on which they agree contain principles of extreme significance in the training of the young. A very broad foundation of common Christian ideas would be left, after the complete infusion of all the Dissenters into the academical body. In literature, in philosophy, in morals, and in many other respects, a basis would subsist on which a solid and definite structure of education might be raised.

It is greatly to be lamented that the question of opening the doors of Oxford and Cambridge to persons who are not members of the Church of England, did not take the form of a demand to admit Christian Dissenters within these societies. As we remarked above, it was the claims and interests of these Nonconformists which gave substance and political importance to this question. Had it assumed such a shape, the two chief inquiries would have been simple, and would have admitted of direct and easy replies. First, Could the exclusive monopoly of the Church of England be sustained under the conditions of our day? The answer must have been in the negative. Secondly, Would the infusion of Christian Dissenters into Oxford and Cambridge so damage these institutions as places of education for the young, as practically to destroy their value, and to be equivalent to their ruin? Here again an affirmative reply could not have been made good. The nation would have judged, beyond doubt, that

the difference between the Christianity of the Church of England and the Christianity of the Dissenters was not such as to warrant the assertion that the authority of the Christian religion, as the official basis of their education, would have been extinguished at Oxford and Cambridge. But unhappily the demand was not raised in this form. The repeal of the condition of membership of the Church of England was not treated as a pure question of Dissenting rights. The issue was not debated on the relative positions and creeds of the competing Christian societies. The nation was not simply asked whether there were valid reasons for keeping Dissenters out of University degrees and emoluments. The Dissenters, partly through their own fault, partly from causes which they were unable to control, became associated with allies who made themselves masters of the situation. The Dissenters supplied the political force, the arguments which told with electors from the hustings; they provided politicians with complaints which were enforced by the Liberal press all over the country, with wrongs which the national sense of justice acknowledged to require redress. But the new associates stated the questions to be tried. They enunciated the principle to be enforced. They raised the issue, which was not the true issue for the Dissenters, but something of a very different kind. They thus gave a turn to the discussion which was not in harmony with the real interests of the Dissenters. The hands were the hands of Esau, but the voice was the voice of Jacob. The Dissenters at the outset went in for one thing, their confederates for another. The Dissenters were incomparably the more numerous body, and their claim commanded the general sympathy of the country. Their allies were, in numbers, an insignificant minority, and what they sought was not really desired by the nation. Never-

theless they overwhelmed the Dissenters, and that in the worst conceivable manner, by compelling the Dissenters to adopt their ideas. They led the Dissenters like sheep into fields where there was no sound pasture for them. They substituted their own object for the natural object of the Dissenters. In a word, whilst the Dissenters desired to enter the Universities as Christians, their allies compelled them to cry out for the official ejection of all religion from Oxford and Cambridge.

The Dissenters have been made dupes in this matter. We say this, because if the end pursued is successfully attained, and the Universities ignore all profession of religion, none will be treated with more scorn and contumely by their allies than these unhappy and unreflecting Dissenters. It needs but a slender acquaintance with the actual feelings of many of these men to convince one's self of the truth of this belief. The Dissenters, we know, are strongly attached to their several forms of Christian faith, and in general they are not very tolerant of each other; and Dissenters who stand stiffly on their religion, and strive to give it effect in the world, will be met with expressions of feeling which we do not care to characterise. Of one thing the Dissenters may be quite sure, that at Oxford and Cambridge, upon a perfectly open system, where freethinking will have absolute free play, and will be authorised to say and preach what it pleases, they, the Dissenters, will be nowhere. There are forces belonging to the Church, whether it will be Established, as now, or be a Voluntary society, as so many expect, which will inevitably command for it some social weight and consideration; but we can perceive no hope of any considerable influence for Dissent. We entertain the strongest doubts of their appearing at the Universities in numbers worth mentioning. Is

this what the Dissenters intend? Is this the object which their passionate and persevering efforts seek to accomplish? Are Universities filled with infidels and Episcopalians—for if the Universities continue to exist, these last will be found in them, with here and there a strong Dissenter, or other non-Episcopalian—the ideal of academic life which they long to procure for England?

But how has this unnatural alliance been brought to pass? Partly, we have said, through the fault of the Dissenters themselves. They have been more intent on pulling down the Church of England than on advancing their own specific cause. They have been carried along by the heat of the contest; they have thought only of the enemy in their front. They found the Church of England strongly intrenched in the constitution of the country and its laws; and they felt they needed every support they could gather for obtaining their end. They thus committed themselves to the doctrine that the State must not connect itself with any kind of Church or religion. From that moment they inevitably fell under the leadership of the unbelievers. The principle that the State must know nothing of religion was more emphatically the banner of unbelief than of dissent. It was sustained with stronger powers of intellect by the non-Christian than by the Christian Nonconformists. It was held by them more thoroughly; they could denounce limitation with greater force and consistency. In the civil and political world, therefore, it was scarcely possible for Dissenters to avoid this union with men so very unlike themselves, for they could have no hope of creating a Broad Church which should comprise Dissenters; and there was nothing left for them but alliance with the unbelievers, who had the same identical end with themselves. But the consequences

of such an alliance were sure to be not all agreeable. The divergence of interests or feelings was certain to break out somewhere. It has come forth in this very question of the Universities. The Dissenters here have suffered themselves to fall under the control of men who in some vital respects are their opponents. They have accepted the formula of real adversaries. Their manifest interest was to enter the Universities as Christians. Their actual cry is for dechristianising the Universities. The exclusive retention of Christianity was possible in the academical world, it was impossible in the civil. There was no chance of limiting the House of Commons and the electoral vote to Christians. The far narrower range and more special function of a University made the specific maintenance of the Christian religion more natural and more practicable. But this distinction the Dissenters have failed to perceive, or, having perceived it, have been unable or unwilling to give it effect in practice. They thus battle under the flag of unbelief. They demand the total secularisation of the Universities.

The result has been a change in the form of the claim insisted on. Instead of requiring the admission of Dissenters, the agitation clamours for the repeal of religious tests. The question is viewed from the aspect of tests. The dominant idea is derived from that word. The manner of the exclusion of Nonconformists is dwelt upon rather than the fact itself, and the difference is very important. The question is no longer whether the Dissenters are fit or not to enter the Universities, but whether the particular barrier which shuts them out shall be swept away altogether. The test is regarded in respect of what it is in itself, rather than in respect of the exclusion which it produces. A test is held up as a thing odious by its very nature. It is painted as an impertinent and offensive inquiry into matters which

are private and personal, and which ought to be exempt from all official scrutiny. Why, it is triumphantly asked, should the religious opinion of a man who teaches Euclid be questioned? What connection is there between Greek and particular religious opinions? Why should the belief in religious dogmas be required in a secular University whose business is to teach letters? What is a test but a hateful prying into a man's conscience, an offensive exploring of his inner mind? What matters heresy or orthodoxy, belief or unbelief, to an institution at once national and secular? Religious sects have ever been wont to dwell on dogma on the necessity of right belief in particular religious propositions. They are never satisfied about a man till he has been turned over and examined, and his religious form has been brought to the appointed standard and found correct. The world is outliving, we are told, such odious processes. Even amongst Christians orthodoxy has no longer the value which it once possessed, and unbelief raises its head on all sides, and has ceased to be a reproach and a title for contempt. The nature of the teaching of Christianity is itself under discussion. The conclusions arrived at by men to whom the title of Christian can in no way be refused, are extremely discordant with one another. To bind men down, therefore, to one single interpretation of the Christian revelation, is a proceeding repulsive to the spirit of the age. It is a necessary consequence from such an intellectual state of modern thought, that the imposition of tests which imply detailed assent to minute and specific statements of Christian doctrine, must encounter resistance in many quarters. They necessarily present a very vulnerable side when made the condition of membership of the Universities.

Other causes combine to swell the difficulty. The University test in substance is a declaration of

membership of the Church of England ; but in form it is a subscription to a vast number of propositions respecting the dogmas of the Christian faith. We know that in the Church at large, in these recent years, the consistency of these doctrines with one another, the truth of some, the necessary acceptance of others, are fiercely challenged on every side. Some escape the perplexities hence resulting by methods of interpretation which take great liberties with the letter. For others the words of formularies are a snare to the conscience, implying some degree of dishonesty when the actual expression cannot be literally accepted. It is easy to understand how a strong feeling of distaste should creep up under such circumstances against the demand of assent to a multitude of diverse statements. And if this feeling is powerful when appointment to the ministry of the Church is concerned, how much more powerful must it be in the case of Universities whose object is general and not clerical education ! The recoil against a test of such a kind has been violent enough to procure from the Legislature a relaxation in the laws of subscription required of clergymen ; and so far relief has been acquired by members of the Universities. Still further progress in that direction has been made in the case of Colleges ; for we believe we are correct in stating that a simple profession of membership of the Church of England is all that is required for admission to college endowments.

These influences combined have precipitated the University question down to the lowest level. Christians and non-Christians have alike been irritated by the existing tests. Those who took the tests, and are supposed to be working under the conditions implied in their acceptance of their offices, but have subsequently lost their belief in either a part or the whole of Christianity, naturally are impatient to obtain

relief by the cancelling of obligations which they no longer fulfil. All such persons constitute a large force in the aggregate, and furnish very vigorous aid in promoting the end aimed at by Dissenters—their own entrance into the Universities. Neither party singly could easily have achieved success ; combined, they have been strong enough to obtain successive majorities in the House of Commons. And thus the word and idea, test, has occupied the whole ground. Everything else is forgotten by the side of it ; every consideration which attaches to Oxford and Cambridge as places of education for the young has been thrust aside as not worth thinking about. The recent meetings at Cambridge and Oxford furnish a striking illustration of this mischievous and unphilosophical method of reasoning. We say the word “unphilosophical” deliberately ; for whilst it is the loudly-proclaimed vaunt of the repealers of all religious limitations that they emphatically stand on first principles and on philosophy, they exhibit the shallowest departure from the fundamental law of all true philosophy, that all the elements of a problem shall be investigated and weighed. Nothing could be more one-sided than the point of view adopted by all the speakers. They dwelt on the grievances suffered by graduates ; they painted the irritation excited by assent demanded for countless propositions ; they repelled the thrusting in of religion into the teaching of secular subjects ; they denounced the interference of the State with a man's belief ; and then, in a passionate glow of resentment, they indignantly repelled all tests. And what was the reasoning on which they took their stand ? Because existing tests work ill, therefore all inquiries into the belief of University teachers were impertinent and against principle. The word test of itself alone was enough for them ; it carried its

condemnation on its very face. And this they recklessly think to be excellent logic: the illicit process of inferring from the condemnation of some to the condemnation of all was a trifle of no account in so obvious a matter. Were they not carrying out faithfully the grand philosophical method of our day? Were they not scattering to the winds the restrictions and limitations and other miserable devices with which antiquated statesmanship and old-fashioned philosophy loved to narrow the application of the truth; and did they not stand in the full and free sunshine of unlimited formulas, of absolute propositions, of principles which soared into the infinite? The House of Lords sometimes does wrong: Down with the peerage! The Established Church has become too narrow: Away with an Established Church! Dogma has been too strictly insisted on! let religion never be mentioned! Young men have been educated in the teaching of a sect: henceforth let them be lectured in every religion upon earth, and then let them select one for themselves!

The total forgetfulness of the educational character of the Universities was the most remarkable feature of these anti-test meetings. Fellows and their wrongs filled the minds of the speakers. The Universities figured there as conferrers of privileges only; graduates were regarded as the recipients of money; and then the hardship was feelingly described of religion interfering with profit. Fellows had obtained their endowments by dint of hard study; was it not intolerable that inquiries into their belief should step in between them and their rewards? The possessors of endowments constituted for these speakers the University itself: no one could have gathered from the speeches delivered that undergraduates existed at Oxford and Cambridge, or that they were worthy of a moment's consideration. A strange and capital illusion surely! What is Oxford but a

school? what gives it importance except the students who frequent its Colleges? what is the very end of the University but its action on these young men? The young students are emphatically Oxford. Oxford was created and exists only for them. The endowments themselves were granted out of regard to their welfare. Oxford without undergraduates would at best be only a board of examiners; and then the fellowships and the other endowments would speedily disappear. In Oxford and Cambridge the nation possesses two great schools to which her young men resort for education; and it is by the effects which it produces on these youthful students that the repeal of the tests, or any other change in the academical constitutions, must be judged. This is the true point of view for estimating and pronouncing upon every statute which affects the Universities. We find no trace of a knowledge of this truth in the speeches of the repealers at these meetings. We perceive no attempt to investigate what results on the young men the repeal of the tests may have. Graduates may be relieved, Fellows may gather comfort, in the enjoyment of their good things; irritation may be allayed, and every senior allowed in peace to be a Christian or an unbeliever at his pleasure: but, after all, there remains the all-important question, How will all these things tell upon the school? This is the one practical and decisive consideration. If the undergraduates are injured, still more, if they are driven away, what signifies the gain which the Fellows may have won? If indeed the present system, or any modification of it, is essentially immoral or unjust, then, clearly, *fiat justitia, ruat cælum*. Better that the Universities should perish than that a wicked or inexpedient institution should disgrace this land. But who imputes such a character to the Universities? Who demands their suppression on

this ground? That there are persons who in their hearts prefer that Oxford and Cambridge should cease to be, rather than that any form of Christianity should be recognised in the education they bestow, we do not doubt; but they are few, and they do not openly avow their opinions. If they did, a fair and manly issue would be raised, and the country would know the nature of the measure it was discussing. The mass of the supporters of the abolition of tests are men of a very different kind. They are not enemies of the Christian religion, but they have worked themselves into an intense dislike of tests; and the complaint we make is, that they have thought only of themselves and their class, and have left out of account those for whose sake they exist at the Universities. They would be quick enough to perceive the effects which measures for the relief of certain feelings in the masters might have on Eton and Harrow, and very possibly they would suggest that those who were inconvenienced should be withdrawn, and the boys be not driven off from the school; but when they think of the Universities, their view becomes radically altered. Their essential character as schools fades away into the distance, and the mass of Fellows and graduates alone occupies the field of vision. That this is a capital mistake no one will deny, except those who deliberately wish to see the Universities converted into bodies which conduct examinations of students trained in other places, and confer degrees and privileges as academical and not as scholastic corporations. Again we say, if this is the end designed, let it be fairly proclaimed, and the debate on its expediency be distinctly placed before the nation.

But we are barred from entering on an examination whether it is inexpedient, in the interests of the students, that the test which requires membership of the Church

of England should be absolutely repealed. The question is judged, we are told: a first principle of overwhelming force has pronounced that the Universities are national institutions, and that this quality of *nationalness* bestows on every Englishman the indefeasible right of sharing the advantages of these bodies without regard to his religion. The word national has settled the matter conclusively. Grant that the Universities are national—and who refuses them this quality?—and every Englishman, be he Christian or Atheist, Brahmin or Mohammedan, has an inherent right to present himself at their portals and claim admission either as a Fellow or a tutor. Great is the magic of a word, or rather great is the power of this new philosophy—a philosophy which is so capable of being extemporised for the moment, and is so susceptible of expansion or compression according as the needs of the philosopher may require. The formula has great range, beyond doubt. When an institution is national, it entitles every Englishman to receive an equal share in it. It is a new doctrine in political philosophy, certainly: but is it true? Let us test it by a case or two. There is no institution so intensely national as the electoral vote; the way in which he is governed affects every inhabitant of these islands. Has every member of the State a share in the election of the House of Commons? Are not one half of the people deprived of all participation in the government of the country? and of the remaining half are not multitudes excluded from the suffrage, avowedly, and upon principle, and with the approbation of the majority of even Radicals? Upon the theory that a national institution must be enjoyed, of right, by every Englishman, manhood suffrage is an indefeasible right, and every man who withholds manhood suffrage violates the most cardinal principle of

the liberal philosophy. What, again, shall we say of the Crown? That indisputably is a national institution, and if national, it belongs equally to every Englishman. Why should it be restricted to a single family? If it must be given to all, then manifestly the doctrine requires that the Crown should be abolished, and the government of the people assigned to a republic. We must not be told in reply that the interest of the whole nation and the nature of the case demand the limitation of the Crown to the Royal Family, for the word national is applied to the Universities for the very purpose of shutting out the general consideration of the public good; it is used expressly to found a personal and inherent right apart from all weighing of general utility, belonging to every Englishman, be he Atheist or Christian, to an equal share of University position and emolument. To bring this right under the contingency of its being shown to be expedient, on grounds of general policy, is to destroy the very object for which its nationalness is proclaimed. The avowed aim is to obtain admission and authority to teach for all religions, without any previous inquiry whether such admission is for the good of the University or of the nation. Here, again, is a third case for the application of the principle. If the intentions of benefactors are no longer to be held of any account at Oxford, the same rule must apply to every endowment throughout the land. If the Oxford moneys are become national, in the sense that every Englishman is entitled to a share of them, so must also the funds of every endowed school; and not only has every Atheist the right to be appointed schoolmaster, but the local appropriation of funds to the neighbourhood becomes indefensible. This is something very like a *reductio ad absurdum*. Then, too, if the University funds are national,

as belonging to every Englishman, why should they be given to the clever men only? If a man is not to lose his fellowship because he does not profess the religion of the majority, why should another lose it because nature gave his rival an unfair superiority of talent? and why, too, should the enjoyment of these good things be limited to the rich—to those who can afford the expense of a University education? Is not this a manifest and monstrous diversion of national moneys to the advantage of a few? It is needless to test the principle further. The doctrine that national property must be participated in by all, not in the way of a general good which benefits the community as a whole, but specifically as a personal right belonging to each man individually, without reference to any other consideration than his own individual right, can lead but to one conclusion, that the property should be sold, and the proceeds applied to the extinction of the national debt. In no other way can justice be done to every one on the basis of this principle; and thus the further conclusion becomes evident, that the principle itself is an absurdity. Stated in this absolute form we can call it by no milder name than pure nonsense. An individual right in a national institution, to be enjoyed personally and directly, and in no way mediately through the general good, is a doctrine fit for communists and spouters in debating societies.

But is there, then, no principle which governs the appropriation of national funds? Are we left to the practical dilemma between the right of every one to be everywhere and mere chance and hazard? Very far from it. In every such case there are two rules which are rational in themselves, and fully meet the requirements of the problem. The institution, in the first place, must be desirable in itself; and, secondly, no limitation should be put on participation

in its benefits, except such as are demanded by regard for the common good, and by the very nature and function of the institution. These principles are simple and obvious, but they are deep enough and strong enough to furnish the means of judging every case. Let us now apply them to the Universities. First, are the Universities advantageous institutions for the nation? Do they serve purposes which promote the good of the people? Is it desirable, in the name of expediency and public policy, to retain their existence and preserve their efficiency? On this issue no objection has been raised. No one argues that the time has come for their suppression—that they may have been useful in the past, but are hopelessly worthless for the future. It is assumed on all sides that they are valuable and of great national utility; the dispute turns entirely on the condition on which their existence shall be continued. The second inquiry, therefore, is the field of battle. The regulations which govern their administration are complained of as violating expediency, and as needlessly and mischievously trenching on the rights of individual Englishmen. A change is demanded; and that change is, the abolition of all official recognition of any particular religion, and the placing on the same level of equality the professors of every kind of religious belief. The question then becomes: Is the change demanded consistent with the function of the Universities and the discharge of it in a manner that shall promote the public good?

This question must be considered in a twofold relation, in conformity with the double function of the Universities. One office of the Universities is to examine students, to award prizes and honours, and to grant degrees. In this respect they are great incorporations, stimulating the pursuit of certain studies, through examinations and rewards,

and binding their members together in a corporation commanding respect and influence with the public. Viewed from this point of view, it is no longer possible to annex the profession of any particular religion as a condition for the exercise of this function and the enjoyment of these privileges. The University of London takes no cognisance of religion, and yet it is readily granted that it serves one great purpose of a University, that its examinations and honours accomplish a highly useful end, and that the absence of religious tests does not impede the efficiency of the University, either in the work it achieves or in the relations of its members with one another. If it is intended to reduce Oxford and Cambridge to mere boards of examiners, inquiring into literary attainment and distributing prizes and distinctions, no reasonable and successful opposition can be directed against the repeal of religious tests. It is obvious, however, that under such a hypothesis the preservation of fellowships seems scarcely possible. They will have lost their *raison d'être*; they will be in manifest excess of any need which the Universities, so constructed, will possess for them. It may be assumed, therefore, as certain that, in these circumstances, they would receive a new destination; possibly they would be taken away from the Universities altogether, and assigned to some general education fund available over the whole country. But does any one profess to aim at the conversion of the Universities into mere boards of examiners and granters of degrees? Does the country understand this to be the object for which Sir John Coleridge brought in his bill into the House of Commons, and for which the meetings at Oxford and Cambridge were convened? Nothing of the kind, we know, is proposed; and consequently the case supposed, in which we conceded the repeal of the tests, is not the one now under debate. It is not sought to make

Oxford and Cambridge assume the type of the University of London. Throughout the discussions raised on this question, it is always supposed that the old Universities are to retain their character of places where young men reside for the purpose of education. They are neither a board of examinations, nor yet a group of lectures to which students may have recourse to be instructed in some branch of literature, and then return to their homes with their manifold influences. This is a fact of the highest moment in this grave question. It merits the most careful attention. The Oxford undergraduates reside at Oxford during nearly six months of the year; and they come under no other influences except those which the University places around them. A student repairing to a lecture at London University for an hour's Greek or Euclid is in a very different position from one whose whole life is spent at college amidst his teachers and his fellows. There is no reason why any other quality should be sought in the London professor besides proficiency in Greek or mathematics. It may be quite otherwise at Oxford. It is plain, therefore, that the abolition of tests must be judged with reference to the peculiar character of the Universities as societies in which the students pass their whole life during half the year. The students must be considered as young men who have no other homes than the Universities.

We have now reached the true form of the question. What effect will the abolition of tests produce on Oxford and Cambridge as places of education for resident young men? Will it be injurious or beneficial? Will it be compatible with the efficient discharge, or even the continuance of their most characteristic and important function? Before we can obtain a correct answer to this inquiry, we must first learn what the abolition of tests really means. On this point we fear that the public mind is singu-

larly unenlightened. The public thinks only of the removal of a needless annoyance to graduates. It imagines that after the repeal no senior member of the University will be tormented with a scrutiny into his exact acceptance of a multitude of dogmatic assertions. He will be left in peace; he will escape the irritation which now harasses him; he will deliver his secular lectures in a calmer mood; and the University will go on pretty much as at present. We grieve to have to explain that this is a most inadequate conception of the change which the abolition of tests will accomplish. It is not a negative statute, a mere removal of surplusage. On the contrary, it is a most enacting, a most creating, law. It confers a most positive right on any and every member of the University to teach any religion that he pleases. It gives power to any college to make the religion of Auguste Comte and the worship of humanity the basis of its moral and religious teaching. It enables any popular and attractive teacher to collect a large class of undergraduates in which an atheistic philosophy may be expounded. It authorises any instructor of the school of Miss Martineau and Mr Atkinson to dwell on the happiness of believing in no future state after death. No interference will be possible, for the University officials will ignore religion. Some governors of Colleges may endeavour to forbid their students from being present at such classes, but the effort will be futile. It will jar with the new spirit of the University; it will contradict its admitted principle; and no machinery will be practicable for enforcing the prohibition. And then the debates and the agitations which will spring up amongst the undergraduates themselves—their incessant arguments for and against Atheism, for and against Christianity—the impulses which make young men adopt a side, fashion, conceit, cleverness

in arguing, love of notoriety. These will be a creation of a new condition of university life—of, in truth, a new society. But surely, we shall be told, such monstrous things will be impossible in a country like England. Only a fervid imagination could contemplate such a moral chaos as capable of existing in England. That may be very true, for it may kill the Universities, but that such things surely will occur is for us a certainty. It is a radical mistake to suppose that mere relief for a tender conscience is the impelling motive with some of the most ardent for the abolition of tests. They scarcely affect to conceal that they seek the non-recognition of religion for its own sake. They desire the fullest liberty for every kind of religious teaching; and when they have obtained it they will unquestionably exercise that liberty. To suppose otherwise would be to mistake some of the most distinguishing features of our time; nay, it would be to fail to perceive symptoms which have already made their appearance at the Universities. There will be no toleration for the smallest interference of authority; the conquerors will not have won a victory which they will suffer to remain without fruit. Absolute religious freedom for teaching and for speaking will be the law of the Universities. But we are incessantly reminded by Liberal journalists and other advocates of the non-recognition of religion, that Christianity has nothing to fear. They shut us up in the neat dilemma, that if it is the true religion it will hold its own against all opponents; and if it is a false religion, no one ought to mourn over its defeat. Such a statement misses the point altogether. The Universities deal with boys—with pupillary students at any rate; and the question is, whether it is expedient, on the best principles of education, that young people of that age should be brought up amid the perpetual dis-

cussion of the first principles of religion, amid perpetual argumentation between competing systems of religious opinion and of morals. Is it good for the young to pass their days for months together in such an atmosphere of combat on first principles? We say that it is not good; that it is pre-eminently bad to educate young persons on the method of everything in morals and religion being an open question. It violates the fundamental laws of education. Education must have a backbone of authority; something must be laid down, something assumed to be true, whilst the educational process lasts. We stand on this position; and we say further, that we are confident that English parents will ratify our judgment. We affirm our belief that they will not send their sons to college, to learn, on their return home, that they had occupied themselves during the term in debating whether there is a God or not. Unless we grossly deceive ourselves, English parents will not endure such a system of training the young; they will not send their sons to college; and the Universities will be converted, by the spontaneous action of the parents, into mere boards of examination. Such is our conviction; and consequently we regard the abolition of all official recognition of any religion by the Universities as, in substance, an enactment that they shall cease to be schools for the education of resident youths. We can look at the matter in no other light. We are absolutely certain that the abolition will call into active play energetic teachers of all manner of religions, and then we say that the inevitable consequence will be that college life will come to an end. The conclusion we are brought to rests on the nature of the case. We build our conviction on no absolute formula; on no intuitive dictum; on no sweeping generalisation extracted from the word "national." We look at the nature of the

case, we repeat; at the nature of young men; at the primary laws of education; at the function of the Universities; at the position of the young men within these societies. We find limitations which rise irresistibly out of such a combination of circumstances, and we deduce the conclusion, that free liberty to teach and discuss all religions is incompatible with the existence of resident young men at Oxford and Cambridge. It is perfectly true that in the big world, amongst grown-up men, Christianity must maintain itself on the condition of free discussion with all thinkers. It is the law of human life; it would not deserve to be believed in as the true religion if it could not sustain such a conflict. But the grown-up world is one thing, a school is another. The majority of grown-up men and women may escape the strife; they need not read the arguments of controversy; they may leave the contest to the trained and the intellectual. At Oxford and Cambridge, on the contrary, the young men will be plunged into the very whirlpool of the argumentation; and such a mode of life is radically injurious to people of that age. Still less is it good for them to be subjected to the preaching and proselytising of every kind of religious belief. The power of Christianity to face every adversary is irrelevant here; it is the state of conflict, of urging young men to select a religion for themselves, which we declare to be incompatible with their residence at the Universities.

But we have heard it often said, such or such a man is so great, his intellectual or scientific eminence is so conspicuous, that he has a right to be at Oxford. He cannot be kept out without injustice and the violation of a natural right. If the plea had been that public policy, that expediency, demanded his admission, we should have acknowledged its legitimacy, and have joined issue upon the fact of the expediency.

That right we utterly repudiate. No man can possess a right to come and ruin the Universities. If Oxford serves a great public purpose, and confers a great national benefit, the demand of admission, at the cost of destroying this utility, deserves no attention whatever. It is empty and worthless. That the presence of a particular teacher at Oxford would not be injurious, that it would establish no mischievous principle, and could have no bad consequences, is a perfectly fair issue, and must be met. But it is not a plea of an unchallengeable right: it must be argued, and this is just what those who bring it forward are not disposed to do. Their only object in bringing it forward is to escape the necessity of proof by the help of an absolute formula.

But what is to be said of the endowments? They at any rate are silent and impersonal things; they do not preach a religion; they carry no philosophical principles on their front. Why should they be appropriated to a single creed or party in the State? They who speak thus ought to be reminded that these funds proceed from private benefactions; and that the doctrine which has hitherto prevailed in this country is, that when such endowments can no longer be applied in the manner prescribed by founders, it is expedient to devote them to some kindred object, to some modification of the original purpose; and that it has not been the practice to apply them to objects in which every man in the nation directly participates. This national theory, which is so freely bandied about in the case of the Universities, has no precedent, so far as we are aware, in the political or social world. It is very obvious that those who proclaim it really assume that it is possible for all to have an equal share in the Universities without destroying their utility; but that is manifestly to beg the question, to assume the only point which has to be proved. But even if the

claim to a wider distribution of the funds could be made good, there would still remain the principle that it would be better and more beneficial for the nation that the endowments should be sold, and the fellowships suppressed, than that for the sake of them the work of the Universities should be extinguished. In our opinion—nay, in the opinion of all—the highest expediency requires the continuance of the Universities as schools, whilst no consideration of equal weight forbids the extinction of the fellowships.

We have spoken of the Universities, let us now say a few words about the Colleges. And in the first place, if the petitions advocated at the meetings at Oxford and Cambridge be granted, and the abolition of all religious tests be made compulsory, what, we ask, is to become of Christ-Church at Oxford? This college is the property of the dean and chapter of a cathedral of the Church of England, and its head is an ecclesiastical dignitary. Is this violation of the new principle to be suffered? Will it be permitted that the chief of the largest college at Oxford should always be a clergyman of the Established Church? Then follow the Christ-Church professorships, of which some half-a-dozen are held by canons of the cathedral. These are officers of the University, and not merely of a college; their case, therefore, admits of no doubt. They are professorships of divinity, and can hardly escape being suppressed by the new rule: if, however, they are retained, they will be separated from the canonries, only the endowments will be lost to the University. The canonries will retain the endowments, which are ecclesiastical property. The college itself, so far as we can see, will necessarily be suppressed; for the buildings are a portion of the estate of the cathedral, and so are the funds allotted to the studentships.

But however this may be, let us

look at the other colleges. The meetings at Oxford and Cambridge strongly urged the expediency of carrying the change beyond the bill of the Solicitor-General, and of rendering the abolition of tests in every college compulsory, on the ground that a mere permissive clause would disturb the peace of the colleges and of the University by incessant contests within each for the abolition of tests. But did the speakers make any effort to think the matter out? Did they actually believe that, when the tests were removed, the minds of the Fellows would sink into a profound calm, and the struggle about religion would be banished from the University region? If they did, we fear they were the victims of a very strong delusion. It requires but a slender acquaintance with the Universities, and the movements which are stirring below the surface, to feel assured that the new phase of their social life will be a letting out of the waters of strife; that a new era of contest will have set in; that it will be fierce and incessant, and that the point of the struggle will not be a mere exemption from inquisitorial prying into a man's religion, but the Christian or non-Christian character of each college. The effort will be to carry the government of the college, and thereby to determine the whole spirit of its teaching, and of the social life within its walls. A non-Christian majority will have an enormous power for destroying all that at present distinguishes an English college. It may shut up the chapel, abolish every lecture in Christian theology, elect tutors, who will be not suspected but avowed and active unbelievers, and determine the tone of its teaching in the interpretation of ancient and modern philosophy in a sense directly hostile to Christianity. These are immense objects to fight for, and, we grieve to say, we cannot entertain the shadow of a doubt that the conflict will be hot and endless, both

with Christians and non-Christians ; and instead of being relieved from the bitterness of religious controversy, the Universities, we are convinced, will be more beset with religious strife than ever, and the ultimate result will be that the students will be driven away, and the Universities will be killed as places of education. Does any one believe that the parents of England will look on such scenes with indifference ? The non-Christians will fall under the strongest impulses which can stir ardent minds to win the youths, the future men of the nation, to their convictions ; and the effort to persuade will be perfectly legitimate in itself, and will be distinctly sanctioned by the new constitution of the Universities.) But equally on the other side, Christian parents will have the most powerful interest to rear up their sons in a faith which they hold to be of infinite importance for their present and future welfare ; and unless they sink into apathy—a violent and incredible supposition—they cannot fail to seek the only protection within their reach, the removal of the daily life of their children from such a hotbed of contention between believers and unbelievers. The first disputed college election for fellowships, in which the defeated candidate raised a cry that he had, with superior merit, been passed over on religious grounds, for or against Christianity, would open the eyes of all the world as to the nature of the atmosphere in which University students had to pass their lives. It is not for us a believable supposition, that undergraduates will come in any number to receive their education under such conditions ; nor can we bring ourselves to think that those who have clamoured so loudly for the repeal of University tests—most of all, the Christian Dissenters—ever pictured to their minds distinctly what was the mode of life which

they were introducing into Oxford and Cambridge.

And now we shall of course be asked what we ourselves propose to do ? The question must be answered, we entirely admit. The present state of things cannot continue ; a profession of religion expressed by subscription, however understood, to a multitude of minute assertions, is no longer tenable. Nor will a general declaration of membership of the Church of England, we fear, solve the difficulty. What membership of the Church implies is itself a question keenly debated, and one on which a conclusive decision is at any rate distant. Were it otherwise—if the true nature of the comprehensiveness of the Church of England could be defined in an explicit statement ratified by public opinion, we should warmly urge membership of the Church as a reasonable and sufficient settlement of the problem, but for one consideration—the Dissenters would be left out, and that objection would be fatal. The solution, then, must embrace Dissenters as well as Churchmen ; and what possible terms of comprehension can there be, except some general confession of Christianity ? We cannot deny that membership of a definite society, of a religious organisation or church, would be preferable to a declaration of belief in certain truths. But the case excludes such a settlement. The time is gone by for hoping to include Churchmen and Dissenters within one body ; and public opinion has irrevocably decided that no valid reason can be assigned for excluding Christian Dissenters from the Universities. This must be acknowledged by all, and this being so, there remains nothing else to fall back upon but some profession of the Christian religion. The question then becomes, whether the advantages of such a requirement exceed its dis-

advantages? As we have shown in the preceding argument, this question must be answered with reference to the school character of the Universities. We are not inquiring whether teachers of Latin and chemistry should be called upon to declare their religion, but whether every kind of religion or no-religion may be taught officially and openly at Oxford and Cambridge; and if not, whether a declaration of a general adhesion to the Christian belief, a declaration that the teacher is a Christian, is the best limitation for attaining the end desired.

The first and most obvious objection to such a method is also the strongest. It does not define Christianity. It does not say what it is to be a Christian; and consequently it leaves it open to every one who makes this profession to affix his own interpretation to it. We must expect, therefore, if it were adopted, to see men ranking themselves by a public declaration as Christians, to whom the world at large would scarcely accord the title. Scandal, therefore, it is argued, would still continue at the Universities; and it would be greatly aggravated by the perception that precisely those non-Christians in whom the sense of honour was most sensitive, and whose consciences would compel them to act up to the spirit of the requirement, would be shut out of the Universities, whilst those whose moral perceptions were weaker, or who had reasoned themselves into a particular mode of interpretation as legitimate, would have free access to Oxford and Cambridge as professors and tutors. There is considerable truth in this statement; but it is not decisive of the matter, nevertheless. The question must be judged practically. The object, be it carefully observed, is not to make an accurate investigation into the quality of the belief of the person who makes the declara-

tion, to ascertain whether strictly he is or is not a Christian. The purpose to be fulfilled is to lay down some limitation on religious teaching within the Universities—to assert some few religious principles as the basis of the life of the students—to prevent certain theories of morals and religion from having the right to be publicly and officially inculcated—to shut out certain questions from being open questions, subject to perpetual challenge and disputation. The good and the evil of requiring University teaching to observe certain restrictions must be estimated with reference to these ends. Nor is this the only practical element of the problem. There must be superadded to it, according to our view, the enormous consideration that, if the profession of Christianity cannot be practically carried out, the Universities will be destroyed as places of public education. It is our belief that the existence of what England means by the old Universities is at stake. It may be that the condition of Christianity is not completely satisfactory; but if Oxford and Cambridge cannot be had on any other terms, we, at any rate, will think that the advantages of the profession of the Christian religion will very much outweigh its disadvantages.

Such are the considerations which are urged against this proposal. We should not be sure, we are told, of always having Christians in the men who make the declaration required. The consciences of those who hang on the border between accepting or rejecting the condition will be wounded. Some men will be kept out who, on the very ground of Christianity, will better deserve to be admitted amongst University teachers than others who have felt no scruple in complying with the condition. There will be a certain antagonism with the spirit of our time,

which is much set against inquisitions into religious belief. True ; but the departure from the intellectual tendency of the age will have an adequate motive. The majority of Englishmen have not yet reached that point, and in all probability never will, where negation is to be omnipotent, where practical considerations of the utmost importance on the positive side are thrown over, simply because the dislike and antipathies of negation are more deserving of respect. Polygamy is not lawful in England, although in some of her dependencies a man may have more wives than one. Positive feeling on this point is as yet stronger than negative, than the claim advanced by some that every man should be able to do as he likes. The adequacy of the motive for restriction is the very pinch of the question. We hold that it is an immense gain in education to have some things fixed in the matter of religion and morals. We say that it is an essential law of all education of the young, that something should be laid down upon authority. No one disputes the right and duty of a parent to proclaim some code of morals and belief for a young child. The only question is, whether young men at the Universities have not passed beyond this stage? We say further, then, that some things ought not, and cannot, be open questions at places of education. They ought not, because they are against the nature of the case ; and they cannot, because parents will practically decide the point by refusing to send their sons to college. The bishops of the Church cannot be conceived as requiring a University training from candidates for orders under a system of every religious question being open ; and if the Universities lose the undergraduates destined for ordination, how many will be the remainder of the students, and how long will they continue to resort to the Universities? It is a very great thing

to lay down at least the existence of a God and the belief in a future state of rewards and punishments as the conditions of education in the English Universities, which, unlike the Scotch, are not a mere body of lectures, but take charge of the whole life of the students. These are advantages so great, that, in our judgment, they completely overbalance the inconveniences which may be alleged on the other side, and merit adoption by all, except those who would rather see the school character of the Universities annihilated, than suffer any restriction on their favourite dogma that no religion of any kind should be professed.

But if the time for establishing such a condition on the student-life of the Universities has passed away, the only hope left is to carry out the plan, which has been suggested in many quarters, of apportioning the existing colleges to distinct bodies of religionists. To us this is an unsatisfactory solution of the problem, because it leaves the teaching of all religion open ; and it is not possible to isolate the undergraduates of Christian colleges and so limit their social intercourse to their own members. Then, further, we do not know whether the proposers of this scheme include in it the abandonment of some of the colleges to those who will not recognise any religion whatever. Infidel colleges by the side of Christian ones is assuredly not a powerful recommendation of University education ; nor does it hold out brilliant prospects of University peace. Already, too, the promoters of the anti-test movement have taken the field against this suggestion ; they demand imperiously to have access everywhere—to be shut out from no foundation which enjoys emoluments derived from benefactors. They claim these as national moneys ; and with them the word national means something which every individual, as individual, has

a right of sharing. However, it seems certain, if anything can be certain amidst so much confusion, that institutions like Keble College, which have no endowments of any kind, which are nothing but a group of buildings, with a single man as head, teacher, school-master, or whatever else he may be called, will be able to carry on their own system without interference. Those who own the buildings cannot be prevented from placing any man they may choose in the occupation of the college; and, manifestly, he may let out rooms in it to any person he may select. No Act of Parliament can prevent his offering them to Christians, and asking, as the condition of their admission, that they will attend Christian worship; for even a statute which forbade compulsory attendance at chapel could apply to those only who enjoyed public emoluments. But although individual colleges and halls may establish themselves on a Christian basis, the formidable fact will still remain, that their students must form one general society with all other young men at the University. They could not be prevented from attending any lectures given by any member of the University, wherever he may deliver them; and consequently they could not be withdrawn from the turmoil and the strife which, we conceive, must be engendered by unrestricted liberty of teaching.

What then, we shall again be asked, do we propose under the actual circumstances of the problem? First of all, we assent to the demand that all profession of religion shall be disconnected from academical degrees. We accept the condition that a declaration of religious belief shall not be required in order to qualify a graduate to take part in the councils of the Universities. Secondly, we entirely and readily adopt the proposal that the enjoyment of a fellowship, regarded simply as an academical prize, as a

reward for successful study, shall be wholly independent of all religious profession. Let young men who are unconnected with the teaching of the Universities enjoy their fellowships at Oxford and Cambridge, or in London, whatever be their creeds. But, thirdly, we ask that the teaching of the Universities, everything which constitutes them schools for the education of the young, shall be combined with some profession of Christianity. In the name of their character as schools which embrace the whole life of the young students during six months of the year, we demand that something positive, some principles of morals and religion, asserted upon authority, and not to be contradicted officially or publicly, shall be laid down as the basis of the Universities. And this condition we hold to be first expedient on the naked ground of public policy, and further necessary, if it is wished that the system of sending young men to college should be continued. We ask that the whole body of teachers should profess the Christian religion, either by avowing their belief in the Apostles' Creed, or, if that cannot be obtained, by simply declaring themselves to be Christians. Should, however, the unstatesmanlike spirit of our time prevail; if men are bent on imitating the processes of the great French Revolution, and choose to rush into all kinds of absolute and unlimited principles; if they will demean themselves to such reasoning as, that because the present tests are unsatisfactory, therefore all religion must be ignored,—then let it be permitted to separate colleges to be specifically appropriated to various forms of religion. But if even this is rejected by the insatiable determination to ignore religion altogether, be it so. Then let the whole of the endowments be abandoned to all winners of them, be they Mohammedans, Atheists, or Christians. One resource will still remain. Col-

leges without endowments, pure private schools, cannot be forbidden from taking such students as they may choose, and educating them after their own fashion. The atheist who demands that every one should do as he likes, must of necessity grant to Christians the same liberty of living and talking together as he claims for unbelievers. He cannot pretend that atheism shall be the sole recognised and free religion.

It will be evident that our feelings as to the future of the old English Universities are gloomy. Reluctantly, and with much sorrow, we find ourselves compelled to believe that the abolition of tests, pure and simple, means, in substance, the extinction of Oxford and Cambridge as schools of education, and their conversion into boards of examiners and granters of degrees. We should rejoice unfeignedly if our anticipations proved to be unfounded, and if some healing power, now hidden from our eyes, should, in the time of need, correct evils for which, at present, we see no remedy. But it seems to us to be a clear duty, now that legislation has become irresistible, to lay clearly before the public what we conceive to be involved in the movement for the repeal of all tests. This momentous question, we see plainly, has not been looked at on all sides. The graduates, their difficulties and their irritation, have alone been thought of. The young men, the students, who are the very Oxford and Cambridge which the nation now possesses, have been forgotten. No one has taken the pains to trace out deliberately what effects such a measure may produce on their wellbeing. Least of all have the Christian Nonconformists reflected on the nature of the haven which they are bent on reaching. We find it difficult to persuade our-

selves that in their hearts they desire to have Universities in which every form of religion and no-religion shall stand on the same level. We still cherish a hope, faint though it be, that they may, ere it be too late, ask themselves the question, whether they aim at the same final object as their free-thinking allies; whether they are not lending the strength which will win the battle to those whose victory will assuredly not be their own? It behoves them to watch the signs of the times; there are warnings, if they choose to notice them, which might make them doubt whether the destruction of every institution of the Church of England is a gain for Dissent. The time will come, sooner, perhaps, than many expect, when Christians of every denomination will feel an urgent need for mutual association and support. *Portæ inferni non prævalebunt adversus eam*, will be eventually true of the Christian Church, in the full catholicity of the communion of all Christians; but it is not true that the wisdom or the folly of Christians can have no effect on the fluctuating fortunes of the Church, as it passes through this world. Churchmen and Dissenters have injured each other much in the past. They may redeem their error by fighting the common battle together in the future. To sweep Christianity away from all official recognition of the Universities, because it will be a heavy blow for the Church of England, is a folly of which we will not, if we can help it, assume that the Dissenters can be guilty. What we ask of them now is to study the question, to ascertain the facts, and to estimate carefully probable consequences. If we can persuade all Christians to do this, our object will have been answered.

EARL'S DENE.—PART IV.

CHAPTER VI.

CERTAINLY the new Fellow of St Margaret's might consider that he had made the most of himself, so far. It was not only that he had succeeded, but his success had been entirely owing to his own exertion; and in such a case a little self-glorification is not unbecoming. Unlike most men, he was not forced to think how differently he would act were it in his power to begin his university life over again. He had not run into debt; he had formed no social habits that require an expenditure of time or money; he had not even wasted himself in conversation, intellectual speculation, or desultory reading. As he had been at school, such was he in his freshman's year, and such he remained until he put on his bachelor's hood. From the very first day of his taking possession of his attic in St Margaret's College he devoted himself entirely to the orthodox work of the place, in his pursuit of which he never allowed himself to be disturbed by any kind of distraction whatever. Moreover, every day with him meant work—work conscious and actual; and his power of realising the immediate end to be attained, and of adopting and carrying out the right means to attain it, was so strong that he can scarcely be said to have exercised any real self-denial in the course which he pursued. Spurred on by his special form of ambition, or rather by what stood in the place of ambition, he showed what may be done by a student without genius, without the incentive afforded by a sense of duty, and without enthusiasm, or love of learning for its own sake. Had the rewards of his university been bestowed for proficiency in billiards, to billiards he would have devoted himself with equal zeal;

and it was in precisely the same spirit that he devoted himself to Greek and mathematics. As may well be supposed, he was not very popular among the men of his own standing, and made but few acquaintances; but he made himself respected, and he valued college popularity at its true worth—which is very little. While far abler men than himself were living according to the number of their years, this old head upon young shoulders was exemplifying the fable of the hare and the tortoise.

Not a remarkably amiable character this, but certainly not weak or contemptible. Such men do not often achieve greatness, but success they can scarcely help achieving. In the result, at the end of his three years, Warden was, on the whole, beaten by only two men in his year: in mathematics, by a man who, young as he was, loved science with the unselfish and all-absorbing love that she demands from her lovers; and in classics, by a strange sort of ruffian who was drunk five days in the week, who slept all the sixth, and who then on the seventh, when he was awake and sober, laughed over Aristophanes till he was drunk again, but who spouted Anacreon over his cups, and dreamed of Greek roots in iambic trimeters. But, barring the enthusiast and the genius, the practical man, who simply read hard to secure his fellowship, was in front of the field. And he had his reward: for while he sat in ease and comfort at the high table of St Margaret's, the senior wrangler was dying of consumption; and the constitution of his other rival, originally as strong as that of a hundred horses, had begun to yield to the inevitable Nemesis of drink, after its possessor had come to grief with the authori-

ties on account of some Greek epigrams which had displayed a great deal more wit and scholarship than reverence or decency.

And now Mark Warden, to whom Aristophanes was only so much matter to be "read"—to use the word in its undergraduate sense—to whom the stars might have been bits of tinfoil for anything he cared, and who, for reasons that Marie could have told, had no right to sit at the high table at all, returned to his father's house as it were in a halo of triumph. When he reached it, the street-door was standing open, so that he had no need to knock or ring in order to pass through the entrance-hall into a small parlour—how small it seemed to him now!—in which a suggestion of wall-flowers unnaturally strove with a decided perfume of tobacco and hot spirits. It was furnished in a more home-like style than the room in Market Street, and yet, somehow, it did not look so much like home. The effect of it upon Mark was even rather chilling. His college rooms were by no means extravagantly sumptuous or unnecessarily comfortable, but they had the advantage of the comparison; and then it must be remembered that he had been a little put out of temper with himself and his belongings towards the end of his journey. And then this was no longer really his home. He had risen above the family level, and its ways were no longer his ways, nor its thoughts his thoughts. And then the old scene suggested memories to him that three years of work and absence had naturally not a little clouded; and although they had been very bearable to him while they did not affect his daily life, they began to look formidable now that he was in the very midst of them again.

The parlour was empty of all save the greasy leather chair, the scratched and bruised mahogany table, the worn-out carpet, the dusty corner-cupboard, and all the

other articles of furniture that he had once accepted as part of the nature of things, but which now looked to him so wretchedly mean and shabby. He was about to pull the bell-rope to announce his arrival, when a maid-servant, not over neat or clean, considering the lateness of the hour, and who, to judge from the redness of her bared arms, in which she supported a tray, might have been own sister to her of Market Street, as indeed very likely she was, put her head in at the door, and then, overcome by either fear or modesty at the sight of a strange gentleman, gave a scream and let the tray with its contents—fortunately not fragile—clatter upon the floor.

"Is my father at home?" asked Mark, a little crossly, for such a welcome as this jarred upon his nerves.

"Why, save us! it's Master Mark. Lord, sir, how you be growed out of sight! You give one quite a turn."

"I was expected, was I not?"

"Well, Master M——, sir, I did hear something. But master, he've dined——"

"Oh, I didn't mean that. Is he in? or my sister?"

"Master's in the surg'ry. And Miss Lorry—I'll go and fetch her."

And this was the triumphant return!

Presently, however, down ran Miss Lorry—beaming, gushing, rosy, and untidy. "Oh, Mark," she cried, throwing herself upon him with a rush, "we'd quite given you up! How hungry you must be!"—was it his fancy only that she said *ungrny*?—"But I'm so glad! Did you come all the way from Cambridge to-day?"—This was not likely, seeing that the journey was over two hundred miles.—"Only think! why, I shouldn't have known you! I am so glad!" And, to do her justice, she looked as pleased as she said she was.

"It is a long time, isn't it? and my father?"

"Oh, he's all right; Jane is gone to tell him. He'll be here directly. Oh, I *am* so sorry! We had dinner at one. I wonder is there anything in the house! Oh, of course—there's the mutton; I daresay it's got cold by now. Or it might be warmed, mightn't it? Oh, here's papa. I thought he wouldn't be long."

And so in came Mr Warden from the surgery—tall, big, loose, florid, loud-mannered and loud-voiced as ever, or rather more than ever, bringing with him a jovial smile, and an atmosphere that showed that if Lorry had been answerable for the scent of the wall-flowers, he was responsible for the other part of the odour of the room.

"Ah, Mark, my boy—delighted to see you! So here you are back again with three hundred a-year all of your own! Who'd have thought it! Ah, college is a fine thing. Fancy a boy of mine making money! Ha, ha, ha!"

"I've had to work for it, though."

"Well, well; that's all the better, isn't it? Everybody ought to put his shoulder to the wheel—that's my maxim. But all work and no play, you know. So now you've come to idle a bit, hey?"

"And how are things with you, father?"

"Oh, slack—slack. But we rub on, Lorry and me. One might do something, if it weren't for that damned fool Jones. I was in consultation with him to-day. He's got in with madam, you know—and much good he'll do her. 'Pon my honour, I don't believe he knows the liver from the stomach; and as for his *diagnosis*—pooh!"

By this time the mutton made its appearance upon the same unfortunate tray. It was both red and tepid; but hunger, though used to look for its satisfaction to the high table of St Margaret's, is still hunger, and Mark had not

grown too dainty to be superior to the effects of a long day spent on the roof of a coach. Besides, the air of Denethorp is not much less appetising than that of Cambridge itself, which is notorious in that respect. And so, though his eyes revolted, he attacked the joint not unwillingly.

"You mentioned Miss Clare," he said, after a few minutes of silence, during which Lorry sat staring at him with all her eyes, and his father ruminated over the sins of Jones. "I travelled with her nephew from Redchester."

"Ah, young Lester? Not a bad fellow that. Set a collar-bone for him once, out with the hounds, when he wasn't that high. He's tall enough now. Lucky dog he is. By the way, there's to be a fight."

"A fight?"

"Yes, for Johnstone's seat; and he'll be beat too. You're just in time to see the fun."

"And who's going to stand, then?" Politics had not been in Mark's line, and so he only asked the question for the sake of saying something.

"Oh, a man named Prescott—an other lucky dog, and an out-and-out—reformer, you know, and that. Speaks just like a what's-his-name, and in with all the mill people. He canvassed me the other day. I'd half a mind to promise for him, just to go against that ass Jones."

"But you couldn't do that very well."

"Couldn't I, though? And I would have too, only then there's that other ass young Smith, who's got hold of that lot. What they can see in him Lord knows. Why, he isn't as old as you are. Jones don't know a liver from a stomach, but Smith don't know man from mutton. No, no. I must vote for Church and King—Church and King, you know—if it was only to put down young Smith. 'Confound their politics, frustrate their

knave tricks!' Now, Lorry, just get out the tumblers, there's a girl, and the brandy. I'm going to have a pipe."

His son did not smoke, nor did he drink spirits, whatever taste he, as a college fellow, had managed to acquire for the nobler port. So he sat unoccupied while his father filled the long clay pipe, of the kind known to connoisseurs as a "churchwarden," and mixed himself a pretty stiff tumbler.

"And now we're comfortable and all at home again," said the latter. "Why, bless my soul, Lorry, you haven't had that window mended yet! We don't want that sort of draught—ha, ha, ha! And now, Mark, my boy, what's next?"

"Next?"

"Yes—when you're going in to be a bishop, you know?"

"I'm not at all sure I shall go into the Church at all."

"What is it to be, then?"

"I think I shall go to London and read for the bar. I've got my fellowship to keep me meanwhile, you know."

"Read for the bar! Bless my heart and soul!" Let it be remembered that to be a barrister was in itself something of a distinction in those days, whatever it may be in these.

"Why not? It seems my best way of doing something in the world."

"Well, you know best, no doubt—you know best. Only be anything but a doctor, that's all I say."

"La, Mark," said Lorry; "what, like the people when the judge comes in at Redchester? And shall you have to wear a wig?"

Any reply that her brother might have been going to make to these appreciative remarks was interrupted by the arrival of one of the friends of the house—a managing clerk to one of the Denethorp attorneys, who, like his master in the old times, occasionally used to

drop in of an evening to smoke a pipe with the Doctor. He was rather a smart fellow in his way, and was publicly supposed to have half an eye upon Miss Lorry—perhaps he would have bestowed the other half also upon her had her fortune been equal to her merit.

"Ah, Brown," said Mr Warden, "sit down, my boy. Mr Brown—my son from Cambridge." The two bowed to each other—Mr Brown genially, Mark stiffly. "And how are things going, Brown?" continued the Doctor. "What's the news?"

Mr Brown was certainly not "good style," and Mark had of late grown marvellously particular about such things. Besides, he had but just parted from Lester, whose style was undeniable. And so he did not go through his part of the introduction with a very good grace.

"Miss Warden," said the other, "delighted to see you so blooming. Sir, delighted to make your acquaintance—proud indeed. Johnstone's retired."

"What?" said the Doctor; "madam going to throw up the sponge? You astonish me!"

"Sounds queer, Doctor, don't it? But you don't know elections like I do. Between ourselves, you know, it'll turn out a dodge."

"To put Prescott's people off the scent?"

"May be. But any way it'll be a dodge. Catch madam asleep—catch a weasel! Not to speak of White & Son. And I will say that for them, that no one ever caught the office napping yet. And there's something up—that I know for certain. You know young Lester?"

"Of course."

"Well, between ourselves, you know, it's a fact he came down by coach this very day. What do you think of that? Put two and two together—eh? I heard it from Sparks, who sat behind him all the way from Redchester."

"And what's he to do?"

"Why, stand! that's what he's to do. You take my word for it, madam means fighting; and I will say that for her, that when she means fighting she fights—and no mistake. But won't the money have to fly, that's all!"

"I wish some of it would fly my way," said the Doctor, meditatively.

"It'll fly every way!" said Mr Brown, triumphantly. "Denethorp hasn't had such a chance this many a day!"

CHAPTER VII.

It must have become pretty evident by this time that Mark Warden was sailing under false colours—that he had set out on the voyage of life in rather buccaneer fashion. He could not but own it, even to himself, distinctly and consciously.

And yet—what was he to do? Everything had somehow or other seemed so plain and easy to him while he was at Cambridge. There, he had not been able, living as an unmarried man with other unmarried men, absorbed in the work of the place, with only himself to think of, to feel that he was not as others were. Marie had become a sort of dream to him; and so he felt, whenever he thought about the matter at all, that he must have become a sort of dream to Marie. Had he been an idle man, with nothing to do but write love-letters, things might have worn a different aspect to him. But when a strong man's heart is in his work, and when that work is purely selfish, he is seldom able to realise what concerns others. But now, once more in Denethorp, relieved from the iron of hard work, and in the midst of all the associations of three years ago, the image of Marie took a far more substantial form, and became anything but a dream. Once more, what was he to do?

He might resign his fellowship, declare his marriage, and take a curacy and pupils. "Of course," the reader will say; "what else?" But then he would have thrown away the hopes, the labour, the success of years; he would condemn himself to an obscure and

uncongenial life for the rest of his days; it would be far worse than committing suicide. No—anything but that, he thought. And let not the reader be too sure, if he is not guided by some nobler principle than Mark Warden, that he, under similar circumstances, would not think in a similar way. And so, before he slept, he entered into a sort of compromise with himself. The marriage had been secret for three years—let it be secret for four; and then—who knows what might happen? It is not only weak-minded men who, when pushed into a moral difficulty, cast their burden upon the shoulders of Fortune.

Nevertheless it was in a frame of mind made up of doubt and of that sort of self-justification which is the surest symptom of unconscious shame that he, on rising, faced the fresh, honest breath of the morning, laden with the old-fashioned fragrance of the old-fashioned flowers of long ago. From the window of his room he saw his sister, with uncovered head, sleeves tucked up, and shoes down at heel, mysteriously engaged with a clothes-line which extended from one brick wall of the garden to the other; and the sight did not please him, for it suggested to him the vision of a future Mrs Brown. Then he descended into the parlour, still strongly flavoured with the effects of last evening. It was by no means early, but there were no signs of breakfast; indeed in that house nothing seemed to be done at any particular time or in any

particular manner. Presently, however, his father came in ; and then, somehow or other, breakfast and Lorry made their appearance together.

"Well, Mark," said the Doctor, "what are you up to to-day ? I wanted to have seen something of you ; but there's always something or another. I really must go and see that child of Wilkins's. I ought to have gone yesterday—only something put it out of my head ; and—hang it ! my boots weren't cleaned this morning. But never mind—they'll do for once in a way. But that reminds me—I promised to go and see what's-his-name on Sunday. Well, well, I daresay it was nothing particular."

"Oh, never mind me. I shall just stroll about somewhere."

Laura looked knowingly at her brother ; for though not a *confidante* of his great secret, she had not been blind to his great flirtation. "I think I can fancy where you'll stroll to," she said.

"And, Lorry," continued the Doctor, "if Summers calls about that bill again, you know, tell him I haven't forgotten it, or something like that ; and if anybody else calls, say I shall be sure to be in some time or other. And you can have that window mended—only don't pay for it ; and have in another bottle of brandy from the Chequers—I've got an account against them there of some sort or another, so it'll be all right. And now I must be off." And so he marched away heavily, munching his last mouthful of breakfast as he left the door.

Then Lorry in a few minutes was carried off by the red-armed maid, and Mark was left to follow his own devices.

His sister had proved to be a true prophetess. As, indeed, he was only bound in duty to do, he took himself slowly and uncomfortably to Market Street. The distance was not far, but he was a long time in traversing it ; for now that his meeting with Marie was im-

minent and inevitable, his anxiety about it, and about the nature of the relation that must somehow or other be established between him and her, for the present almost tempted him to fly from the situation altogether. He almost began to doubt whether he, the precociously wise, had not been guilty of a great piece of folly for once in his life.

Chance also aided his feeble attempts to procrastinate—attempts of which, to do him justice, he was half ashamed. It was by no means a pleasant thing for him to feel that he, Mark Warden, Wrangler, Fellow, *et cetera*, *et cetera*, was afraid to meet Marie, who was Marie and nothing more. He would have sufficiently despised any other man who feared to meet a woman, and that woman his own wife. But for himself, he welcomed the chance that aided him, nevertheless.

At a smart trot along the High Street came a light trap, driven by his travelling companion of yesterday. Hugh Lester also saw Warden and pulled up.

"You're the very man I want to see, Warden !" he said. "What do you think ? I'm going to stand for Denethorp."

"Indeed ? But I heard something about it last night. I wish you a triumphant return, with all my heart."

"Thanks, old fellow. But you must do something more than that. You've become a great man here, you know."

"I am sure I did not know it."

"I don't know what people don't think you've been doing. There seems a sort of impression that you've been made Archbishop of Canterbury. I've been having a little talk with White, you know. I wish you'd come and see him, if you wouldn't mind."

"But what could I do ?"

"Oh, lots of things. You see this is how things are, or something like it. You have heard, I suppose, that they want to turn us out ?"

"But they won't, of course."

"Not if we can help it. But from what White says they seem to have got all the brains on their side and most of the money. Are you a good hand at talking—at spouting, I mean?"

"I never made a speech in my life."

"Never mind that. The fact is, White has been asking me about you, and I told him you could do everything. So just come and see him, there's a good fellow. I shall be tremendously obliged."

"I should be delighted to be of any use, of course—if I thought I could be of any."

"Of course you can. You'll come and see White, then?"

"Now?"

"If you could. Can you?"

Warden smiled to himself. This was indeed a triumph in its way. So he was to be pitted against the new-comer—to provide brains for his party! It was *faute de mieux*, of course; but a man, when he feels really flattered, does not think of that. He had had a welcome back worth having, after all. "It is always so," he thought to himself; "a man is always best appreciated outside his own home."

But then Marie—he ought not to be an hour longer in the place without at least trying to see her.

"I have a call to make," he said; "but that will keep, if you and White really want me."

"Jump up, then—I'll drive you, and we can talk as we go along. By the way, I have to go a little out of my way first—you won't mind? I have to pick up a young lady who is staying with us, and who came in to make a visit, and whom I'm to drive back to Earl's Dene. You know something of her, perhaps?—Miss Raymond of New Court, you know."

"Indeed? My father used to know Mrs Raymond."

"No doubt; she's a capital girl. I mean her to canvass for me furiously; and as you're to do the

same, I must introduce you. I wish I had an elder brother, Warden—catching votes won't be such good fun as catching trout, I fancy. However, I'm in for it now—so Lester for ever!" he said, with a laugh, and a touch to the horses that made them start off sharply. "I shall be as excited about it as my good aunt herself before it's all over. Gently, Bay—that child may be a voter's—so there's my first piece of bribery," he said, as he threw a coin to a small child that had apparently taken care to wait before crossing the street until its passage lay directly under the horses' heels. "And now, here we are."

They had turned into Market Street, and, to Mark's surprise, had stopped at the very bootmaker's shop to which he himself had been bound when he was overtaken by Lester. Surely it was not likely that Miss Raymond of New Court should buy her shoes in Denethorp, much less in Market Street. He devoutly hoped that none of the Lefort family might be looking out of the window, for he naturally wished to make his own visit in his own way.

Lester sent his groom with a message for Miss Raymond that he was at the door; and presently down came Ernest to say that she would be ready immediately.

Now Ernest was rather a sharp child, and something of a terrible one also, as sharp boys of his age are apt to be; nor had Cambridge turned Mark quite so much into a silk purse as to have rendered him unrecognisable. And so the messenger, without having delivered his message, and without any awe of Hugh, made a charge at the side of the trap at which his old acquaintance was sitting.

"Why, Ernest!" said the latter, with forced geniality, "where do you drop from? and how are they all?"

"Oh, all right. Oh, I was to say the lady will be down directly."

"And who are you, my man?" asked Lester.

"Oh, I'm Ernest."

"And who's Ernest?"

"Don't you know? Ernest Lefort."

"You know the Leforts, Warden?"

"Yes—that is—oh yes, I know them. Wait a minute, Ernest. I'll just run up for a second, Lester, if you don't mind."

"All right. By the way, would they mind my going up too? It would be rather a joke—I'll tell you why afterwards. I know one of them myself."

Now it would be doing Mark Warden supreme injustice to suppose for a moment that he was in the least really ashamed of his humble friends in the presence of his grand acquaintance. His real desire to make his visit alone was of course founded on other reasons. But still to guide the heir of Earl's Dene to the bootmaker's second floor was rather a downfall, after having been paraded in the streets of Denethorp as his familiar companion, and he felt it a little.

Monsieur Lefort had gone out to give his lessons, so that when the two entered, preceded by Ernest, they found only the three girls and Fleurette, who was amusing herself upon Miss Raymond's knee.

The circumstances were not favourable to a lover-like meeting between the husband and wife; and now that matters had so turned out, Mark was not altogether sorry that he and Marie were forced to meet as though they had been nothing more to each other than old acquaintance. But he read in her eyes, and in the warm rush of light and colour to her face when she saw him, that she, however much she had changed—and changed for the better—in person during these three years, was unchanged as far as he was concerned; that her heart was still as much his as if the three years had been but three hours. And for this too, so mingled were

his feelings, he could not find it in his own heart to be sorry. Who can be really disappointed or displeased at finding that a woman has remained more true to him than he has remained to her? For an instant she was once more to him the Marie of old times, and he fully answered the speech of her eyes with his own.

On their entrance Miss Raymond rose and put down Fleurette. The business of introduction seemed likely to be complicated, for there was no one in the room who was acquainted with everybody in it, and, except Hugh, everybody was surprised to see everybody else.

"Miss Lefort," said Hugh, to cut the matter short, "I am exceedingly sorry to break up so pleasant a party; but as my friend Warden would have done so in any case, I yielded to the temptation. Miss Raymond, this is Mr Warden of St Margaret's, who is going to help us in our battles."

She looked at Warden with her honest eyes, and made him a cold and formal curtsy, which, had he observed it, and had he been given to speculate about such things, would have puzzled Hugh considerably. Then, turning to Marie, and seeing her embarrassment at the unexpected visit,—

"Now, Miss Lefort, I really must go. Angélique, this is Mr Lester, Miss Clare's nephew."

Now Angélique, in spite of Miss Raymond's kindness to her, always made a point of remembering and keeping what she considered her place as a dependant; and so for these few minutes she had retired into the background. Now, however, she emerged from her dark corner, and Lester saw her—suddenly.

The ascent into that poor and shabby lodging had been worth making, with a vengeance! Hugh felt as a traveller in the desert would feel who should all of a sudden light upon a rose-bush in full blossom springing from the dry

stones. By the side of Alice Raymond she was like a southern night beside a pale northern morning ; by that of Marie, like the full moon with its faint attendant star. He was certainly no poet, nor did conscious images enter his mind ; but somehow the chairs and sofas did idealise themselves almost as absurdly as if he too had thought of Arabia Petræa in connection with them. Not that the comparison is so very absurd either, for they were certainly hard enough.

Angélique must have been exceedingly stupid indeed if she had been blind to the effect that she produced upon the prince of her cousin's fairy tale, and miraculously free from vanity had she not been gratified by it. Truly if it is the early bird that picks up the worm, it is not necessarily for its own eating.

No one else, however, noticed anything. Miss Raymond was busy with her shawl, Marie with Miss Raymond, and Mark, as usual, with himself—perhaps also a little with Marie. Still Hugh fancied, after a moment, that he must have betrayed himself, although, in fact, he only appeared to be a little awkward, as men for the most part are under any circumstances when they have just undergone the misery of a sudden introduction.

Lester.—“Are you living in— in Denethorp, Miss Lef—Made-moiselle ?” (“Damn it ! what an ass she must think me !”)

Angélique, not showing that she thought so at all events, and in her sweetest voice.—“I am only on a visit. Miss Raymond was kind enough to let me come here while she is at Earl's Dene. This is my home, however—at least when I am not with her.”

Lester.—“Oh yes—I forgot ; Miss Lefort is your sister ?”

Angélique.—“My cousin.”

Lester.—“I suppose you heard of our interview this morning ?”

Angélique.—“Oh, she gave us quite a grand account of it.”

Lester, recovering himself a little.—“And abused me, no doubt ?”

Angélique.—“On the contrary, I can assure you.”

Marie.—“Oh, Mr Lester, what must you think of me ? I have not thanked you and Miss Clare——”

Lester.—“You will do so by coming. And” (to Angélique, or, more accurately, at her) “you also—if—that is——”

Angélique.—“I am no artist, I am ashamed to say.”

Miss Raymond.—“Don't believe her, Hugh. She does everything.”

Angélique, to herself.—“I wonder why she calls him Hugh ? But I should have known if there was anything.” Aloud.—“Badly, Miss Raymond was going to add.”

Miss Raymond.—“Indeed I was not, though. If Mr Lester were not in a hurry to get away, I would punish you by condemning you to the harpsichord on the spot.”

Angélique.—“Oh, pray, Miss Raymond——”

Lester, forgetting all about Warden, White, and everything that he ought to have remembered.—“Would you ? Might I ask ?”

Angélique, throwing him a look of private and special complaisance.—“I would much rather you would excuse me, indeed. I am really not——”

Lester.—“But I am sure that—will you try ?”

Angélique, with a look of the same kind as before, but tempered by a half-smile.—“But perhaps you do not care about music ?”

Lester.—“But I do indeed. There is nothing that I care for so much.”

Miss Raymond, opening the harpsichord.—“Oh, Hugh, that's just what you said last night about hunting ! There, Angélique—you see you will have to do it.”

Angélique.—“I wish you had not raised Mr Lester's expectations. However, I will do what I can to dissipate them. Ah, you have no doubt heard Miss Raymond herself ?”

Miss Raymond, laughing.—“If he had, do you think I should give him the chance of hearing you? I am not quite so careless of my reputation.”

And so Angélique, having displayed the proper amount of unwillingness, sat down and sang.

What she chose to sing is of no consequence, nor how she sang it. Lester knew nothing about music.

Englishmen in those days knew as little about it as they do now, and cared about it even less. But nevertheless he was soon lost in a heaven in which he forgot every man in the world and every woman but one—in which he became so lost indeed as to forget even his horses, which were impatiently pawing the stones before the door.

CHAPTER VIII.

At last, however, when the one song had grown into many, the visit came to an end. Lester had, when in his ignorance of what was to come and on the spur of the moment he proposed to amuse himself by following up his adventure of the morning, intended that it should last about two minutes; and to him, indeed, it seemed to have lasted not a second longer. In truth, however, the church clock, unheard by him, had twice chimed the hour. Miss Raymond had been in no hurry to run away, for she enjoyed the slightly Bohemian character of the whole thing, and was easily amused; and Mark, though he was not enjoying himself at all, could not under the circumstances betray his desire to cut the visit short.

When the three visitors departed, Lester carrying away with him a look, sharp as a sword but soft as velvet, thrown to him from the dark eyes of Angélique, which had the effect of filling his whole heart and of raising his spirits to a delightful point of mild fever, then said that young lady herself to her cousin,—

“*Eh bien, chère enfant!* I congratulate you on that worm of yours!”

“What—Mr Lester?”

“Who but Mr Lester, of course? He is really a very good-looking boy. And so that is the heir of Earl's Dene?”

“I really do not know. He is

Miss Clare's nephew. Yes, I suppose he is.”

“And has she any other nephews, or any people of that sort?”

“I believe not.”

“And what do you think of my Miss Alice?”

“Of Miss Raymond? Oh, she is quite charming, and so kind!”

“Yes, she is, no doubt. Suppose there should be a match between them?”

“I am sure they would suit each other admirably.”

“My dear Marie, what a child you are!”

“Why?”

“Why? because you are. And now, what has your old friend Mark Warden had to say for himself? Why, how you colour!”

“Do I? I'm sure I didn't know it. I am very glad he is back again.”

“He has certainly improved—he looks like a man; much more of a man than young Lester. He was a very disagreeable boy, though.”

“Angélique!”

“Now, dearest, please don't scold me, or look at me through your eyebrows like that. I have no doubt he is perfection now. Do you know, I feel quite in high spirits. Do you think of going to Earl's Dene to-morrow morning?”

“To-morrow? I don't know. Perhaps one had better not to-morrow. I wish Mr Lester had not made such a point of my going.”

"Oh, Marie, what an old prude you are!"

"I think it might be better not, perhaps. It was altogether rather a fuss about nothing."

"Very likely, dear. But then one thing comes of another; and nothing doesn't come from nothing always. Now I am sure we have had a very pleasant morning party, and that would never have been but for your going to the park. And then it would seem so ungrateful of you not to go now."

"I hope not. I can't help thinking that the whole thing has gone far enough. As you say, we have had a very pleasant morning party——"

"Well?"

"And let that be the end of it."

"Why, do you take Mr Lester for a wolf, and us for two innocent lambs? I am not a lamb, I assure you, and don't mean to be; and he seems to me to be very harmless. And Miss Raymond here too!"

"I daresay you are right. But still—— Come, now we are alone, tell me something about your letter from Félix."

"There—you may read it if you like."

"What—all?"

"Why not? There are no secrets."

And so Marie took the letter, and read as follows, while Angélique returned to her favourite window, and amused herself with the first two cantos of 'Don Juan,' which she had brought down with her:—

LONDON, — — —.

"DEAREST.—I am in England—in your land! In mine too, for since you left Paris, France has been my land of exile—England my true home. Are you surprised? But you cannot be surprised that my body should have followed my soul. Do not be surprised if it follows you more closely still, for your absence has cheated me of the reward of seeing you. Shall you

be long gone? When shall you be back? If Paris became a desert to me when you left it, what must this London be? I am angry with the sun for shining where my own sun is not; I can only hope that it is the herald of your return. Is it so?

"The first thing I did on arriving, before doing or thinking about anything, was to call in the Square of Portman. What a gloomy house! That also seemed to feel its desolation. There, after much difficulty—for the words 'I love you' help me not much, and of your tongue I know no more—I learned where you now are, and that you are so many leagues away. Then I carried a letter of introduction to a friend of M. Prosper, who, as you know, has friends everywhere. I found him at the theatre, where he is director of the music. He received me well, and thinks I did not wrong to come here as an artist. There is room enough for foreign musicians, he tells me, since the peace, and he will be able to get me an engagement either at his own house or at some other before my purse is empty. You will say, perhaps, this does not sound very grand. But what would you? Rome was not built in a day, and I am not afraid were London ten times as large. Do I not love you? and is not that enough to become great—is it not more than enough?

"I have so much to say to you, or rather I want to hear you say so much to me! For indeed I have but little to say but that I love you more than ever, were that possible; but love makes me afraid, makes me doubt, though I know your truth so well: I want to hear once more from your own lips that you have not changed since the time when Paris was not a desert to me."

"Am I to go on?" asked Marie.

"If you are not *ennuyée*," answered her cousin, calmly.

"I tremble so much when I think

what kind of life is yours—not solitary like mine. If I knew not your soul so well I should often despair, even now, when I think how much you are above me. For that alone I *will* become great, and that soon. And music to me is so entirely filled with you that how can I help being inspired?

"Of course as yet I know no one here, nor do I care to know anybody or see anybody but one, and she is invisible. Pray send me a line to say when I may hope for my winter to be over, and for my summer to come. If it is long first—but do not let it be long!

"Longing for you, for anything from you, dearest Angélique, your wholly devoted
FELIX."

"Is it not nonsense?" asked Angélique, as she took back the letter.

But Marie did not think it nonsense by any means, and she answered by an embrace.

"Poor fellow!" Angélique continued. "Yes, he is very good, but then he sometimes is very tiresome."

Marie stared.

It did not, however, strike Angélique herself that she had said anything very surprising, so she did not observe the effect of her speech. "You see," she went on, "he is very amiable and very clever, at least as a musician, and I like him very much—better than any one I know, except you—and when I come out he would do admirably for a husband, if I am to fall into that line; and he is quite good-looking enough, and he is a gentleman, although he is only a fiddler—"

"Angélique!" This seemed to be Marie's limit of reproach.

"Marie!" replied Angélique, imitating her tone. "You don't expect me to find perfection, do you? And, after all, if it comes to that, I don't consider myself hopelessly engaged."

"Not engaged?"

"Of course we are, after a fashion. But then there are so many ways——"

"My dear Angélique!"

"Oh, you need not be afraid; I do not mean to break his heart. I shall marry him, no doubt, if he ever makes enough to keep us both from starving. You would not have me be a clog upon him, would you? And if it is not to be, why, it won't be, that's all."

It will be gathered from this conversation that Angélique was the elder of the two, not only in years, but in some other things besides. But then she had seen a great deal more of the world.

"Oh, Marie," she said, "I do wish I were a man!"

"Why?"

"Because I could marry you."

But Marie did not smile. She said, crossly for her, though not for any one else, "I know you do not mean a single word you have been saying."

"Of course not—who ever does? But I really should like to have you for my wife, Marie. But men are such simpletons. Come—don't let us quarrel any more. I feel inclined for a walk."

And so for a walk they prepared themselves—Angélique in the very best of spirits, Marie rather sadly. At all events her cousin had puzzled her considerably.

Nor is it certain that such sadness as she felt arose wholly from what seemed to her her cousin's unnatural way of speaking of her lover. That, she simply did not understand; and although it jarred upon her, she never dreamed that somehow it was not all right in reality. It was that, without knowing it, she had been disappointed in Mark Warden—if, indeed, "disappointed" is not too strong a word.

Not that she realised any such feeling. On the contrary, she was proud of his success, proud of his apparent friendship with Lester; for the people of Earl's Dene were

the aristocracy, almost the royalty, of her limited world, and, paradoxical as it may sound, it is just those who know least of the world who are most impressed by rank and wealth. She was proud, also, of his improved appearance and bearing, and she was proud that her old belief in him had been justified. But behind all this not unreasonable pride there lurked a feeling of the existence of a want or loss of sympathy—that most intangible and indescribable of feelings which is always most strong when it is most intangible and indescribable. It was not that he had seemed cold and undemonstrative. He was cold and undemonstrative by nature, and perhaps in this lay no small part of his influence over her; for reserve, inasmuch as it implies strength, is the great secret by which anything like real influence over a woman is both gained and secured. Besides, there had as yet been no opportunity for any display of warmth, seeing that the two had met not only before others, but before strangers. But still she had found his manner towards her not such as it might have been in the presence of a hundred strangers, although she could not have specified a single instance in which he could have spoken or acted differently. The fact is, that he could not under any circumstances have spoken or acted differently; and had he been in reality altogether unchanged, no want or loss would have suggested itself. But as the want did exist, it would have equally made itself felt in any case.

It is really impossible to put in words, which are always, even at best, terribly gross and hard, the faint suggestion of another unconscious feeling that found its way into the heart of Marie; for while words are strong in proportion to their direct strength and plainness, feelings are strong in proportion to their obscurity. To attempt to express their shadowy *nuances*, even in poetry, is to risk trespassing on

the province of another art; for though Art, in a very high sense, is doubtless one and indivisible, still, practically, its branches have very fixed and definite limits, which ought to be, and indeed to some extent must be, observed. Now, unfortunately, that form of art which works with words, while it is not less noble than other forms, and while it can, in many respects, soar far higher than the others, is in this respect the most limited of all. It cannot affect the heart but through the logic of the mind—a terrible drawback when it is necessary that the heart should speak to the heart without the intervention of any logical process or logical symbols. Musicians and painters are far better off in this matter; they may reach the soul through the senses alone. The eye and the ear have no need of reason in order to understand; they need but to see and hear. But what can a word do, after all, with its fixed and inflexible definiteness, speaking to no sense, and only suggesting in the first instance a cold, gross sort of accuracy, which is absolutely hostile to the expression of emotion?

The application of all this is, that were one to say that the perusal of her cousin's letter produced a sensation of jealousy in the heart of Marie, a word would be employed that would be as inappropriate as possible; and yet, at the same time, any other known word would be more inappropriate still. Jealousy is a feeling of which, accurately speaking, she was utterly incapable; and had she been capable of it, it would never have been where Angélique, her heroine of heroines, was concerned. But is it just possible to conceive of a sort of jealousy—there is no help for it, the word must be used—which conveys no suggestion or taint of anything hateful or degrading, even although its cause is fanciful and even absurd? In the infinite series of emotions there must be some such feeling, though the note that repre-

sents it may have no place in any recognised scale. Indeed some such thing must exist, for Marie experienced it. The letter had supplied her with a material foundation upon which to fix her floating half-thoughts about her husband. She was able to make an unconscious contrast. And yet, some-

how or other, he gained something by the contrast too. And so, for the first time in her life, her heart was really troubled, and she did not know why.

But it was, in truth, all plain enough. She, like her husband, had not exactly been standing still all these years.

CHAPTER IX.

But Angélique, though excited, was certainly not troubled in any disagreeable sense. Not that her thoughts and dreams were always of the most agreeable kind; for, thanks to her friends the Raymonds, she had seen something of the world, and was very naturally dissatisfied with her position in it. She could not avoid holding the doctrine that things in general were not quite as they ought to be. No one likes to own that he or she does not belong, by right of nature, to an aristocracy of some kind or other, and every one believes that his or her own kind is the best and truest. Miss Clare would not have agreed with her; but there is something, at least, to be said in favour of the idea favoured by Mademoiselle Angélique, that beauty and talent are not in their right places when they serve only to attract penniless fiddlers, and to waste themselves upon one who, being, socially speaking, nobody, was unable to outshine by their means the plainest and stupidest of the class to which Miss Clare and Miss Raymond belonged. She could not admire a condition of things in which the maid had to outshine the mistress in vain; in which the New Courts and other good things of life belonged to the less clever; and in which Fortune, unlike the shepherd of *Ida*, threw the golden fruit to the less beautiful.

She was quite sufficiently quick to judge of the motives of the people about her; and she did not suppose that Miss Raymond

had been invited to be a guest at Earl's Dene for nothing. Indeed, had she herself not been given to draw conclusions from what she saw, the never-ceasing gossip of the town, always busy with the affairs of everybody, would have drawn them for her. Miss Clare had not entertained a visitor, save on matters of business, for years; and now, just when her heir had come of age, and was at home, she was entertaining one who was young, beautiful, and rich. Within the last few hours Earl's Dene and New Court had been married many times over by many tongues. A great many things passed through the brain of Angélique while Hugh Lester was standing over her at the harpsichord, and set her wits wandering in the country of infinite possibilities—a process with which coquetry had in reality but very little to do. Marie would have stared, indeed, had she been able to read the last thought that passed through her cousin's mind before she fell asleep, for it was nothing short of this:—

"And suppose . . . and suppose that I were Mrs Lester of Earl's Dene . . . Lady Lester of Earl's Dene . . . Angélique, Countess of Denethorp . . ."

And where she would have arrived in her dreams heaven knows, were it not that waking thoughts and dreams seldom have much in common. Perhaps she experienced in them the fate of *Alnaschar*; perhaps they were with *Félix*.

But enough for the present of

girls and their dreams and fancies. The war between Whigs and Tories, between Earl's Dene and the cloth-mills, had begun. Before, however, entering upon a subject of such importance, yet one word more must be bestowed upon Angélique, for her letter from Félix required an answer. In the following copy of it, the words placed in brackets appeared only in the rough draft, and were in her fair copy altered to those that immediately follow them. It will be seen that there are not many such alterations; for she was an excellent secretary, as well for herself as for Miss Raymond:—

"23 MARKET STREET,
DENETHORP, —*th*.

"MY DEAR FELIX,—I own I *was* surprised to learn from your letter that you were [so near me] in London. Is it quite prudent of you to have taken such a sudden step? But I suppose you considered it well, and acted under good advice. It would be most painful to me to think you had acted [thus on my account] otherwise. Did you consult M. Prosper first? If you did, you have not told me what he said. I am very much afraid [as you say it will be a disappointment to you] that I shall not be able to return to town immediately, or even soon. Miss Raymond has not yet said anything about coming back, and of course my movements depend entirely upon hers. She has been good enough to do without me while she is here, and I am staying with my uncle and cousins [and am enjoying my visit to them very much]. Of course I shall be glad to see you. But do not think of coming to see me here; it would never do. This I mean *really*. You must stay in London and work for *your own* sake, and show a little patience for *mine*. I should be very [angry] vexed, indeed, if you were to come here; and so you will not, I am sure. Indeed I do not see how you could, as you are looking for an en-

gagement; and you *ought* to get one as soon as you can, and not lose your chances for a mere *caprice*. If you have made a useful friend in this person to whom M. Prosper has introduced you, you must not lose him, if you really mean to be as successful as I am sure you may be if you like.—With all best wishes, believe me your affectionate friend,
ANGÉLIQUE LEFORT."

Never was colder letter kissed. But then wisdom always seems cold, and Angélique was rapidly growing wise. It is one thing for a young girl, with her character scarcely formed, to indulge her first fancies by falling in love, or by imagining that she falls in love, with a kind of romance hero, especially if she had been touched by the *mania Byronica*; but it is a very different thing for the same girl, when months of youth, which correspond to years of later life, have defined her feelings and made her capable of forming something like a real purpose, to keep faithful to mere romance. It is not at all wonderful that, in the day of the Medoras, the Gulnares, and their tribe, a very little mystery should have been able to go a long way in attracting her fancy. Even now, when Laras and Conrads are gone out of fashion, mystery is notoriously by no means a bad line for a man to take if he wishes to be thought of with interest by a very young girl whose dreaming days are not yet over. When, therefore, Mademoiselle Angélique was really young, the young artist, who chose to wear his hair long, who talked in the language of romance, and yet of sincerity, about love, art, and so forth; who came from a land of hills and forests, and who, for anything that he knew about his birth and parentage, might have been the heir of the Bourbons themselves; who preferred, as a matter of taste, to make love to her secretly, and who shared in that absurd but not unamiable kind of

hypocrisy which leads very young men to like to make themselves out to be very much worse morally than they really are,—had quite enough points in his favour to touch her fancy if not her heart. She would have preferred, no doubt, that they had been respectively sultana and pirate, instead of only being *dame de compagnie* and fiddler; but still imagination will do a great deal in such cases—a great deal more than change a fiddler into a pirate and a *dame de compagnie* into a sultana of sultanas. The unromantic Marie would have been safe, in all probability, from the influence of a real and genuine Lara; but the violinist was unconventional enough in his ways, singular enough in his appearance, and mysterious enough in his origin, to pass in her cousin's eyes for a sufficiently good imitation of the real thing—as a peg on which she might hang up her fancies to dry. For she had thought a great deal about love in those days—as much as she was getting to think about marriage now.

There are one or two proverbs that contain more truth than falsehood; and one of them, unhappily, is, that familiarity breeds contempt. Though mystery is a good key, it is a very bad lock; it does very well to open the door of a heart, but it is by no means well adapted to keep it safe and secure. This must be done by sheer strength; and of sheer strength, overmuch talk about love and art, and the youthful affectations of long locks and mild wickedness, are in nowise symptoms—at least not of the sort of strength that is required to hold for ever a woman who had opened her eyes to the fact that the good things of the real world are by no means to be despised.

But, once more, it is the eve of battle; and yet do we linger in ladies' bowers? Nay, rather

"Sound, sound the clarion, fill the fife;"

and in fact the clarion—from Red-

chester, at eighteenpence a-day and as much beer as he can swallow—is sounding to the fray; nor are local drums and fifes wanting to beat and whistle with a heroic disregard of light and shade, of time and tune. Words, as hard as bullets, and almost as telling, are hurled about the place incessantly, and every now and then missiles that are harder still; standards are displayed, union-jack against union-jack, and motto against motto; rosettes begin to enliven frieze and broadcloth, on this side with hue of heaven—on that, with the colour of flowery fields: and the armies rush together in a shower of gold and silver, as though Denethorp were Danaë, wooed by rival Joves. In a word, it is a contested election of the good old days, when men hit at least as hard as they do now, and far more openly.

He who has seen, he who has heard, may picture to himself the outward phenomena of the long exciting weeks that preceded the nomination of a Burgess to represent in Parliament the borough of Denethorp. Mr Prescott came down from London, open-handed, to represent the cause for which, according to the orators who held forth at the Chequers, "Hampden died on the field and Sydney on the scaffold." He made an admirable candidate—far better, it must be confessed, than Hugh. He was, though not an old man, an old hand at such things; and if he was not actually much more wealthy than Madam Clare, and if he did not spend more freely—that was impossible—his resources were much more readily available, and he spent with greater ostentation and *éclat*. He, moreover, had no local prestige to lose. If he won, it did not matter how he won; and if he lost, he lost no more than that one particular contest. And then he was the popular candidate, and had the noise on his side—and that, in an old-fashioned contest, was always a great point in a man's favour.

In a state of things in which the sanest of men becomes part of an insane crowd, noise creates sympathy. The ordinary man always likes to add his voice to the loudest chorus; and so "Prescot for ever!" was shouted forth much more often and much more loudly than the similar cry that was given for Lester. But, above all, while the latter was an untried boy, the banker from London was a man of mark and weight, with whose name newspaper politicians were familiar; and while Lester spoke only like a gentleman, and that badly, he spoke like an orator—like a mob-orator it may be, but still like an orator. Altogether he was the very type of a popular candidate; and his party in Denethorp could not have brought down a better man.

Still Hugh had his advantages. A feeling of duty is in itself a source of strength, even in an election; and he honestly believed himself to be the champion of the right. Besides, he was, after all, fighting a stranger upon his own ground—always an immense advantage in every sort of war; for in this respect the truest of proverbs shows its weak side, and familiarity breeds not contempt but confidence. He was popular also, and his manner of canvassing was such as to draw upon him no personal ill-will, even from his opponents. That was all reserved for Madam Clare, who drew upon herself a great deal of it, and not without real cause. She made no pretence of concealing her cards, and victory would be of little worth to her unless it was carried by a high hand.

She was, however, wise enough not to trust entirely to herself and her prestige. It was not without good reason that she placed great reliance upon Mr George White, her Denethorp solicitor, who, though unused to election contests, was not unequal to them, as Mr Prescot's more practised agent very

soon discovered. And in no way did Miss Clare's lieutenant-general prove his wisdom and discretion better than in first getting hold of Mark Warden, and in afterwards gradually promoting him to be his own first lieutenant. Mr White was not a man of many words, but this is the opinion of Mark that he, after a week or two of work, expressed to Mr Brown:—

"If we were fighting for that fellow Warden instead of young Lester, by the Lord! I'd just go to bed at once, and order myself not to be called till after the poll."

The practical man, young as he was, and new to the work, found his labour congenial—far more congenial than he had found Sophocles and Newton. He was the only man on the blue side who could fight the invader with his own peculiar weapons on equal terms. He canvassed indefatigably, and not in too scrupulous a manner: he spoke often and well; and though, as an orator, he was rather apt to talk over the heads of his audience, he thereby gained no little reputation for himself. A mob is always rather flattered by having addressed to it what it does not quite understand. And then, too, he had the advantage over Prescot of being well up in all local allusions; and he had the prestige of having not only been born and bred in the place, but of having become an honour to it besides—a prestige that he and White worked to the uttermost. Perhaps, after all, the cry of "Lester for ever!" was only less loud because for the name of "Lester" was so often substituted that of "Warden."

Madam Clare was not slow to see how things were going, and she became not a little jealous. But she made him a welcome visitor at Earl's Dene whenever he had occasion to call there, and treated him as his merits and services deserved. Miss Raymond too, who had caught the election fever in its

most intense form—so much so as to become sometimes quite angry with her candidate for not coming out so strongly as he ought—came to treat Warden as the hero of the hour; indeed she heard his praises sung by all around her so often and so loudly that, being a very different sort of young lady from what Miss Clare had been, she quite got rid of the impression that he had somehow made upon her at their first meeting. It was true that he could not ride across country; but then he could talk: and even with more enthusiastic amazons than Alice Raymond the tongue of silver outweighs the best hand that ever lay on bridle, when its owner knows how to use it discreetly. As for Marie, she grew ten times more proud of him than ever, and took such warm though ignorant interest in all he did, that he would have been more than man had he not felt the old chain renew itself in spite of everything.

And then, too, in those exciting, harassing weeks he needed rest sometimes, more especially as the life he was now leading was not well calculated to restore his nervous tone. And where should he find rest? At home? His father now talked nothing but politics, and Mr Brown, of whom he had to see quite enough during the day, had now become a more frequent evening visitor than ever. At Earl's Dene? Nothing but politics there also; and besides, when he went there he had to exert himself, and to sustain his reputation. Where, in fact, should he find rest but where he ought to find it—that is to say, with Marie?

Nor was he the only visitor at Monsieur Lefort's. He generally confined himself to calling there in the evening; but when he did chance to go there in the daytime,

he more than once found Hugh Lester neglecting his interests for a while to hear Mademoiselle Angélique sing.

This sounds but a slight matter, nor did any one concerned see any harm in it. To Marie it would have seemed the most natural thing possible had all the county crowded into the little room to hear the music that she held to be the most beautiful in the world; and, girl as she was, she was not one of those who cannot see two people together without at once leaping to extreme conclusions. Monsieur Lefort did not trouble his head about it—he had other things to think about than such nonsense. Warden could not have seen any danger in it, or he would not rather have encouraged these visits of Lester's than otherwise, with a view to getting his candidate out of the way while he worked to better purpose without him. Lester, one may assume, did not; nor Angélique, one may hope, when one remembers the existence of Félix. What Madam Clare would have thought about it is another thing; but, fortunately for her repose of mind, her nephew did not include his visits to No. 23 in his daily journal of the progress of his canvass. He always had plenty to tell her without alluding to such a trifle.

But the result of it was, that more and more he left Warden to bear the burden and heat of the day alone, and that the latter daily advanced in the trust and confidence of Earl's Dene. Miss Clare did not like him overmuch; but she trusted him and was grateful to him, and that, with her, meant something better than liking. At all events, if he was setting sail under false colours, it was with a fair and favourable wind.

THE OPENING OF THE SUEZ CANAL :

AS COMMUNICATED TO BULLION BALES, ESQ. OF MANCHESTER,
BY HIS FRIEND MR SCAMPER.

PART II.

MY DEAR BALES,—You have stuck so closely to your household gods and your iron safe that it would be idle to ask you whether or not you believe the proverb, “*Cælum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt*.” For my part, wanderer as I have been, I believed it thoroughly—the few instances where it did not apply in my experience being but brief ecstasies of hot youth, exceptions to prove the rule. Whether I sojourned beneath a vertical sun or in a frozen climate, whether my pace was fast or slow, if I gave myself up to sloth, or if I took the wings of the morning and fled to the uttermost parts of the sea, still black care was behind me. The inevitable *Ego* moving as I moved, halting where I halted, would never let me escape. I could flee from zone to zone, but my consciousness, my trouble, my burden, they travelled as fast as I: heat could not quell a fault of disposition, nor ice remove a pain. Vanity and vexation, I said. It is but lost labour. I cannot gain a stride on myself. The heavens, the earth, the shores, the woods, are different, but I am I. Then one day I passed into a region where the sun’s rays seemed to come to us through an amethyst, they were so warm and purple—where every inch of the soil had power to compel the mind, it was so rich in tales and relics—where the figures as they walked to and fro were as though they belonged to some phantasma, some other life where dreams became material and realities fled away into dreamland. Every faculty of the mind was attracted by outward things, and flew toward them as the nails from the Calendar’s ship

sprang to the rock of adamant; not one could spare a glance inward to observe how it was being wrought upon. There was food enough for thought, but it was food that tempted across the gulf of centuries, and among ruins and in riddles. I walked and enjoyed without stint or fear. I knew it not, but I was I no longer; my identity was gone; I was transported out of myself—not the sky only, but the mind was changed. This transformation, Bales, was wrought in Egypt, where, as it was in the beginning, is now, and, I suppose, ever will be, magic pervades the earth and sea and sky—where a mysterious veil comes down between you and the outside former world, and you are lapped in scenes and thoughts of another existence. I found that I recovered the power of enjoying almost like a child—that memories, cares, and pains were softened down, and the atmosphere was one rainbow. So I lived and dreamed. One only link remained to bind me to the world which I had left—one which resisted sorcery, yea, and will resist. I have never ceased to yearn toward a hearth far away in England, nor to think of the faces gathered round it in the dark cold evenings, where, haply, they talk of me the wanderer, and reckon how long it may be till I rejoin the circle. This link at least is perfect and unweakened; sorcery would attempt in vain. The magicians did so with their enchantments, but they could not.

As I read over this beginning of my letter, I think the internal evidence will pretty well prove what I have said about my mental condition. One that tries to pass for a staid commercial man, too! I

think I see your elongated face and arched eyebrows as you read. "Poor fellow!" you have been saying for the last five minutes; "poor fellow! I knew that he was a little flighty, but this—this is really very sad indeed. Restlessness is always indicative of something, you know—something very unsettled!" Your forefinger may have unconsciously sought your forehead as you said so; but fear not any serious aberration for the present, Bales. To prove to you that I have not quite lost control of my pen, I will deliver myself immediately like a man of this world. And now let me think—what was I going to tell you? I announced in my former my arrival at Ismailia and the doings there. Now perpend as I go on with my adventures.

After the Viceroy's ball there was not much to interest one in the newly-risen town. I saw two or three Egyptian regiments—one lancers, the rest infantry—moving. On the whole, their appearance was good, the men looking for the most part sinewy and smart, and stepping well. The cavalry horses were certainly not to be admired. They were small, and though showing good necks and chests, invariably fell away in the hind quarters. They were over-caparisoned, too. Very gorgeous housings are tolerable on only remarkably fine animals.

Some of my companions went to see the performance of dancing der-vishes, which appears to have consisted chiefly of a spinning course in which the devotees went round one after the other until exhausted. Then there were wonderful waggings of the heads, and unintelligible shoutings and groanings, the whole having probably a religious meaning that is hid from aliens like us. Later on I saw some der-vishes myself, but could make nothing of their doings.

On the 19th the *Empress* entered the southern portion of the Canal, and all of us should have recom-

menced our voyage, but a want of clear instructions brought about considerable delay. We received some silly order to shift our berth, and got up steam for the purpose of obeying it, which, when other ships saw, they assumed that we were going to forestall them in the passage, so they too got up steam, and there was an ugly competition. During the scramble, a Russian ship that ought to have followed us attempted to run across our bows so as to reach the Canal before us. It was a manœuvre admitted on all sides to be unwarrantable, and our Russian friend made rather a bad thing of it, for he produced a collision of which he did not get the best. He hauled off from us ranting and swearing vehemently, and with one of the planks on his port quarter uncomfortably smashed. The effect of the disorder was, that further passage on that day was prohibited, so that we had to wait another night in Lake Timseh. On the morning of the 20th, however, we got once more into the Canal, and sped along for some time freely. After breakfast we were alarmed by a stoppage; and the Canal making a bend to the right about half or three-quarters of a mile in front of us, we were enabled to see what was going on for some way toward Suez. Right before us and up to the bend all the ships were stationary. Beyond the bend, at the very limit of our ken, were ships, diminished to the size of boats, and their masts to fine lines, calmly advancing; but running the eye along them backwards towards ourselves, with sharp scrutiny we soon came upon the masts and funnel of one which did not advance, and which was evidently blocking the rest. This was the *Peluse*, a ship drawing some 19 or 20 feet. Her hull was screened by the bank of the Canal, but we saw her masts and flag, and the smoke rising from her funnel, by which last sign we knew that she was doing what she could to get

off, and did not consider her case past praying for. That occupation of watching a distant object is not at all pleasant, especially when it has to be long continued, as it had in this instance, for we looked and looked, but could not be satisfied that the masts moved a tittle. At first we kept flattering ourselves that the ship was slowly advancing, but every idea of the kind proved erroneous; and after a while we got the mainmast in line with a rock and a bush from a particular spot on our own fore-castle, and by this method soon ascertained beyond a doubt that she was fast. When the stoppage had lasted about an hour and a half, I confess to you that it began to look serious. There was not, however, a very fine opportunity afforded to them of little faith for prophecy or denunciation, because, firstly, there was reason to hope that the leading ships were already close to, if not in, the waters of Suez; and, secondly, because, if our ship could not get on in reasonable time, the fresh-water canal and the new railway—both tolerably near—presented means of sending on passengers and baggage. It could be only a partial failure at the best, and so the whining had to be done gently. A small tug-boat now passed us, bound, as we soon saw, for the scene of the accident, for her smoke was shortly seen close to the smoke of the Peluse. We at length gave up our watch, and dispersed according to our fancies—some to lie down, some to smoke, and some to pack their clothes, which now they were assured they must send on shore. I went below to write a letter for the post at Suez, and I wrote for some half-hour or more, when it occurred to me that I would go up and see how the Peluse was faring before lunch. I had picked out exactly the right minute for my examination, for, on taking my station in line with the rock and the bush, our landmarks, and directing my glass on the mainmast,

I saw plainly that either the Peluse or we had moved a little—she had moved some yards, or we had swung or drifted a few inches. The change sufficed, however, to revive the interest of watching, and I soon had the satisfaction of observing that the Peluse was, beyond a doubt, once more under way—a piece of intelligence which I was not long in communicating to my fellow-voyagers. As this was the greatest so it was the last hindrance that happened throughout our passage of the Canal. The Peluse must have stuck between the stations of Tussoum and Serapium. Presently after starting again we came up to the former station. The *capitano* whom I mentioned in my last letter had been along the whole line of the Canal before; so he, taking his cigar from his mouth as the station opened to view, said, for general information, "This is Tussoum."

"Too soon!" answered a staid, matter-of-fact passenger, who was very angry with the Peluse, and much dreaded that she had lost him a week in the transmission of an important despatch to Europe. "Too soon! I should like to know how: anything but that."

"Yes, of course, it is Tussoum. I am sure of it," said the *capitano*.

"That may be your view, but you'll find very few to agree with you. I don't call it too soon."

The rapid *capitano* began to discern; he turned to me and withdrew his cigar once more. "No, it is not too soon, because it is too late; but it is Tussoum all the same. He is droll;" and he sucked at the cigar again. The staid passenger threw him a look of compassionate imbecility and resumed his walk, fuming. It was exactly like the blunder of a farce.

We were getting now into view of some tolerably high ground to the right of the Canal. Chains of hills, trending from the direction of Cairo upon Suez, broke the monotony of the desert. They showed some strata of hard rock.

These were the ranges of Génэффé, Awerat, and Attaka. About there the Canal is cut through some comparatively high ground; and here, perhaps, more than at any other point of the work, the fall of drift-sand into the channel is to be dreaded. That some obstruction, entailing a running charge, will be continually caused by the sand along most of the cuttings, there is every reason to expect; but this apprehension, so plausible when propounded in general terms, dwarfs rapidly when estimated by rule and expressed in figures. It is calculated that some £20,000 per annum—no very great sum in respect of the magnitude of the work and certain large expenses of maintaining it—will pay for the removal of all drift-sand from the bed of the Canal, and of that which may be washed in from the banks or with the sea-water. And it must be remembered that between Ismailia and Suez, where the fresh-water and maritime canals run in parallel directions, the former will have a very favourable influence as regards the moving sand, by its power of producing a broad strip of vegetation on either side of it, and of thereby lessening, to an extent which we cannot yet exactly estimate, the quantity of loose sand in the vicinity.

After passing Serapium we were soon in view of the Bitter Lakes, which, on this 20th November, stretched out a broad fine expanse of water, particularly refreshing to eyes that had been so long watching the monotonous features of a sandy wilderness. The large area of water, and the apparent depth of it, greatly

astonished me, for I remembered—and you will remember when I allude to the circumstance—that it was only in autumn last that the waters of the Red Sea were led into these basins; and, to judge from the time that Lake Timseh took to fill, the Bitter Lakes, eight or ten times as large, would have required a year at least. But there is this to be considered, that the salt-water from Lake Timseh had been allowed to pass through the Canal into the basin for some time previous to the severance of the barriers which kept out the Red Sea; that Lake Timseh was filled from the Mediterranean alone, while the Bitter Lakes drew from both seas; and that the section of the Canal, when it began to feed Lake Timseh, was a very much smaller figure than it is now. In making comparisons at a distance one is apt to overlook these little circumstances which so materially affect results, an observation which might have been suggested by the result of almost every operation related to the Canal. I entreat you to bear it in mind when you read the predictions which are still being recklessly published as to the Canal's future. Stubborn facts, which it was beyond the power of pen and ink to extenuate or contradict, have all along proved that De Lesseps, Voisin, Lavallay, and the other bold minds, knew very well what they were about when they proclaimed to the world what they intended to do. It is not they, but their supercilious ignorant revilers that have throughout the history of the work been found in the wrong.* Choose then, Bales, whe-

* On the 11th June 1859, the correspondent of the 'Morning Post' wrote from Alexandria as follows:—

"M. de Lesseps formally proceeded to inaugurate the commencement of the works by making a speech to the audience he had collected round him, consisting of the commissioners, a few dozen Maltese and French labourers hired for the occasion at Alexandria, and the Arab guides and camel-drivers who guided them to the place. He then turned up the first, and probably the last, sod, or rather shovelful of the sand on the site of the entrance of the future Suez Canal into the Mediterranean, and desiring the assistants to do the same, proclaimed the grand

ther you will follow blind guides who have misunderstood and misrepresented almost every step in this great work, and have done and are doing their best to verify their own predictions, or whether you will trust those who have established the highest claim to your confidence by working out, in spite of physical and moral difficulties attending the execution, and in spite of detraction, these immense designs!

Whether the Bitter Lakes are full or not, it is certain that there is sufficient water in them to allow large steamers to scour along regardless of the exact line of the Canal. As you work out of the long narrow passage and float into the broad inlandsea there is a disposition to frisk and deviate, to try the pinions, as it were, and feel that the good ship can slant and double, and turn on her centre, and shake the water from her tail whenever she has room to disport herself. In our case, however, the energy called up by the expanse was not wasted in gambols. We breathed our barks and did a bit of

business at the same time. For it so happened that a rival, a ship belonging to a company which had had the impudence to proclaim our company a delusion and a snare, and to say that our boats were miserable creeping barges, scarcely able to drag their slow lengths six miles an hour, was before us. But our enemies, though they had written a book, and proved their superiority to demonstration in ink, had carefully avoided the minor test of a trial in salt water. Our skipper had said nothing as the last few furlongs of the Canal were passed; but it is probable that mighty thoughts were seething in his breast, for no sooner did we see ourselves in the open lake than he signified his intention of bringing the enemy to action. He was a mild Italian, with a musical voice, and did not use very terrible words; but his sentiments, taken out of the *bocca Romana* and put into a *bocca Sassonese*, would read thus: "By jingo! here's this backbiting lubber right ahead; he can't haul off, and must show what he's made of. Clap on

work to have begun. This solemn farce being over, they returned to Alexandria," &c. &c.

The 'Times' of December 27, 1860, has the following:—"Will our friends on the other side of the Strait forgive us if we remind them of a subject on which they were talking with considerable vehemence a few months ago? Pray, how is the Isthmus of Suez getting on? We are impatient for the performance of those magnificent promises. We are waiting anxiously to sail through that bit of desert which cuts us off from the East, and sends us down across the equator, and round the stormy Cape."

From the 'Saturday Review' of 31st December 1859 we extract the subjoined:—"Let us suppose, for the sake of argument, that M. de Lesseps was as great an engineer as he is an enthusiast—that, owing to the pious intercessions of the 480 Roman Catholic priests who have signified their adhesion to his plan, it was no longer the nature of sand to drift, or of mud banks to accumulate; let us imagine that genius, blessed by Cardinal Antonelli, had achieved miracles, and that the French Canal was a *fait accompli*. . . .

"Unfortunately for M. de Lesseps, and perhaps for Europe, a canal such as he has projected is absolutely impossible. The greatest European engineers, including the late Mr R. Stephenson, are unanimous in representing the mechanical obstacles to its construction as insurmountable. Supposing even that they could be overcome, further difficulties remain which would prevent it from ever becoming a great European route. . . .

"The First Napoleon—who, like other great men, had great dreams—regarded the possession of the Nile as a step to the possession of the Indus. The canal which M. de Lesseps is now projecting is but a *réchauffé*, with some slight alterations, of a design first planned during the campaign in Egypt. Unhappily the smaller mind which has borrowed a great man's ideas has not the genius which told their author that they were impracticable," &c. &c.

then, my lads, and we'll bring him to his bearings before he can say Jack Robinson. Confound him!" We began to gain upon him, seeing which, and instinctively divining our purpose, the enemy spread a lot of canvas, hoisted up his boats, which he had been towing, and made all taut for a race. After this it was soon apparent that we did not gain upon him as at first: it was certain that we could not pass him immediately; it was doubtful whether we could pass him at all. Faint cheers from the enemy's decks; he is taking heart; the betting not at all in favour of our own ship; reactionary feeling; hah! why the devil did you try it! Skipper probably did not know that he was valiant and so cunning of fence, or he had seen him damned ere he had challenged him. Skipper does not give in, though. *Fas est et ab hoste doceri*. He does not, for some reason or other, incline to carrying much canvas, but he, too, is towing his boats—up with them! Boats are got in and cradled; barky seems to feel some relief; she is certainly stepping out better; does she gain at all now? betting very dull; enemy seems to hold his own; he will enter the Canal at the end of the lakes before us again. Skipper excited; everybody excited; it will be a neck-and-neck thing at the worst. No, by Jove! no. We are gaining, though but slightly. Enemy sees it, and ceases to cheer; puts on all his steam; so do we; advantage slightly on our side. In the mid-lake the two boats are nearly abreast; cheering from our decks; enemy disheartened; enough of the lake left for us to get a full length ahead at this pace. We do more; we beat him out and out, and show him the name on our stern as we go first into the Canal. Hurrah! hurrah! The passengers in both ships are as keen about the race as if they had a personal interest in their respec-

tive ships—carried away by the spirit of rivalry, like Dr Johnson at Plymouth, when he said, "Sir, I hate a Docker."

The race has taken us through the lakes, and as the shades of evening fall we are in the last stage of our transit—namely, the Chalouf cutting and the excavated channel between that and the Red Sea. It is amusing to find how the bugbears that were so elaborately dressed up to look specious and frighten people from the thought of the Canal have had their stuffing shaken out of them. It cannot be forgotten how evaporation was to dry up the Bitter Lakes much faster than the Canal could feed them with water, and how the salt deposited by the evaporation was to fill up the basin in half no time. Well, the salt water has run very steadily in, and is undoubtedly, in fact, able to supply the lakes much faster than evaporation can diminish them; and as for the salt, it seems to have altogether slipped out of notice. Even theoretically the terrors will not bear handling. Taking the probable amount of evaporation over the whole surface of the Bitter Lakes, it may amount, Mr Hawkshaw calculates, to from 9 to 10 feet in depth in a year, but the tides from Suez will send in twice as much water as would thus be withdrawn. The deposit of salt, even if it were not disturbed by currents or winds, and were allowed to settle quietly down, which it will not be, would not amount to three inches in a year!

While in the Chalouf cutting we were ordered to drop our anchor for the night, that we might enter the harbour of Suez by daylight. There was such a general impression now that we were to get through that nobody took the trouble to misrepresent the meaning of this order, or to make it a text for lamentations. Far otherwise; it was the last night that the same party would all spend together on board,

and we resolved that this dinner should be the most cheery of a very cheery series. To this end we went to work with a will, and there being on board every requisite for getting up the moral steam, we were a marvellous short time in becoming kindly affectioned one to another, and in finding out that everybody was the best fellow that everybody else had ever known. We drank cordially to the health of our kind host and hostess, who had brought us under such pleasant circumstances to see these great sights, and then we flung about toasts rather wildly and irrelevantly, fighting off, as it were, what we knew was coming, and was to be the health of the evening. Our skipper had earned the goodwill of every one on board. He was only an Italian, and could not therefore be expected to know the deportment which we Northmen consider essential to the dignity of the quarter-deck. Accordingly, when asked a question, the poor fellow had always given a civil answer; if he saw a landsman perplexed, or heard him blundering about marine affairs, he kindly explained matters; and whenever he found the rules of the ship giving real inconvenience to any of the party, he relaxed them as much as possible. At anxious times he allowed himself to be questioned, and had always a comforting response; and when, after being warned and entreated, we persisted in getting, one after another, between him and his helmsman, he displayed the long-suffering of Job. It had been decided that we should not leave the ship without arrangements for presenting him with a souvenir of our pleasant and most interesting voyage; and our request that he would accept the offering was to be preferred in proposing his health this night. There was no doubt as to who ought to be our spokesman on the occasion, as there was a person on board whose rank and office marked him

for the lead; but this person could not speak Italian—at least he could speak only a peculiar dialect of it (I have heard him say, "*A vete up-setto il mio groggo?*"), and the skipper did not know a word of English. Here was a difficulty, but it was speedily met by the proposal that my friend the ever-ready *capitano* should interpret after the speaker. Accordingly the toast was proposed, clause by clause, like the general confession, which method proved to be anything but a detriment; for the proposer experienced a difficulty which had occurred to Moses in the same part of the world some years before,—he was "slow of speech and of a slow tongue." Moreover, he put the offer of the present a little bluntly, so as to have hurt the skipper's sensibility, perhaps, if the original had been understood by him. But any defect was immediately cured, and more than cured, by the ability and tact of the *capitano*. The sentiments were everything that could be wished; it was the language only that wanted smoothing, and this was transmitted to the skipper's ear like "gold from the furnace," as Mrs Gamp has it. It went to the *capitano* somewhat halting and not over-choice Anglo-Saxon, and it reappeared from his mouth flowing and impressive Italian, all the edges rounded off, all the gaps bridged over, and the circumlocutions made straight. The thing was delightful. The skipper's facial muscles were a study as the accents fell upon his ear, and all who saw that he was a little bit moved could not help feeling slightly too. And I assure you that the pressure of the steam was very high when we came to the cheering, and any stray Ghouls or Afrits that may have been about the desert that night must have started not a little. The waes-heel of the Vikings was storming their solitudes; the West was upon the East once more; the spirits thought,

perhaps, of the last sounds that they heard in that fashion—“*Hierosolyma est perdita, hurrah!*” * I like drinking healths in proper measure and at proper times. That it is a custom more honoured in the breach than the observance was very well for a moon-struck moralist like Hamlet to say. As he never did anything but talk, and never meant to do anything, and never could do anything worth the naming, he naturally looked at the dark side of the practice and condemned it as sottish and debasing. But fellows who have any go in them know the value of ripening opinions and bringing resolutions to a head by a well-conceived toast. They know how mind takes fire from mind, how enthusiasm passes like an electric current when conditions are favourable, how men pledge themselves to noble acts when in open-hearted fellowship. And they are something of old Falstaff's way of thinking in regard to “your excellent sherris” as a means of freshening the mind for the conception of generous ideas. Depend on it, the people who drink healths are people who admire great deeds and mean to emulate them; who make public profession of their

faith in effort; who will hold together to the last thread. Fill up, then, to those that are worthy; there is nothing to blush for in the generous draught; it didn't much hurt our race of old, why should we give it up now? We won't; no, we won't! Fill up there! hip, hip, hip, hurrah! again, again, again! hurrah! hurrah! one cheer more, hurrah! Hamlet be condemned!

Lest you should ask me, Bales, as you are so fond of doing, whether seriously and literally you are to understand the above to be my fixed opinions, I say at once that, resuming my pen at half-past ten o'clock in the morning, I am not prepared to stand by every jot and tittle of this writing. *Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur ab illis.* Just now, I think the ideas a little strong; but there are times when I would endorse every syllable of them.

Those who desired to see the sun rise and the Chalouf cutting—the stiffest bit of work in the whole Canal—rose by candle-light at four o'clock. I was one of them. There was more work going on here than at any point that I had seen. The Egyptians, after their fashion, seemed really to be working hard.

* A writer in ‘Notes and Queries,’ No. 142, says:—

“‘Hip, hip, hurrah!’—what was the origin of this Bacchanalian exclamation, and what does it mean? I make the inquiry, although I annex an attempt to define it, which was cut from the columns of the Edinburgh ‘Scotsman’ newspaper some years ago:—

“It is said that ‘Hip, hip, hurrah!’ originated in the Crusades, it being a corruption of H. E. P., the initials of ‘*Hierosolyma est perdita*,’ (Jerusalem is lost!) the motto on the banner of Peter the Hermit, whose followers hunted the Jews down with the cry of ‘Hip, hip, hurrah!’”

That the deserts of Egypt echoed to the war-cries of the Crusaders is proved by the following among many passages that might be quoted from historians:—“The King of Jerusalem” (Baldwin) “having no longer the Turks of Bagdad or the Turks established in Syria to contend with, turned his attention towards Egypt, whose armies he had so frequently dispersed. He collected his chosen warriors, traversed the desert, carried the terror of his arms to the banks of the Nile, and surprised and pillaged the city of Pharamis, situated three days’ journey from Cairo.”—Michaud’s ‘History of the Crusades.’

Afterwards, in St Louis’s Crusade:—“From the Canal to Mansourah, and from the Nile to the shore whereon the Crusaders had just landed, the country presented but one vast field of battle, where fury and despair by turns animated the combatants, where torrents of blood were shed on both sides, without allowing either Christians or Mussulmans to claim the victory.”—Ibid.

The Sultan of Cairo, we are told, promised a gold byzant for every Christian head that should be brought into his camp.

It was painful to hear the number of coughs that proceeded from them. This was their winter, although it felt like summer to us, and that fact may account for the sounds of catarrh. It is to be hoped that there was nothing worse than a cold there: consumption, or even bronchitis, would be inexcusable in a climate like that!

Fortunately it was determined to form the Canal at Chalouf before letting the waters of the Red Sea into the Bitter Lakes. Had a smaller channel been first formed to fill the lakes, as was done in the case of Lake Timseh, the excavations at this point would have been exceedingly tedious and expensive: for the workmen came down upon rock which had to be blasted; and blasting rock under water, and moving and landing it after blasting, are formidable operations. The parties which we saw at work as we passed were still, I fancy, clearing rocks from the sides and taking away earth to form the requisite slopes. As many as ten thousand men were working here at once last summer; and Chalouf, like Port Saïd and Ismailia, sprang to its first stage of township almost by magic. As yet there are only wooden huts there, but these will soon be replaced by more substantial erections if it be found advisable to establish a town there. It was in this cutting that we were startled by some marvellous noises made by our machinery or screw, and by the steamer heeling over on her port side as if we had been in a rolling sea. Things were soon steady again, and the explanation given to us was, that the ship being now very light from consumption of coal, the screw had accidentally got almost uncovered for a minute, when, meeting no resistance, it spun round uncontrolled making the astonishing noise and frightening the ship from her propriety. And this quieted us at the time. What had really happened we understood better when we made our

return-voyage along the Mediterranean.

And now, somewhere about eight o'clock on the morning of the 21st, we emerged from the maritime Canal into the harbour of Suez, having safely accomplished the passage from Port Saïd. That what had been so loudly and so constantly proclaimed an impossibility had been actually done, and fairly done, we could no longer question, for we had tested its sufficiency and been satisfied. I did not, however, just now indulge in reflection or exultation as perhaps I ought, for I was calculating rather anxiously the chances of being able to reach Cairo in time to dress and attend a ball at the palace of Kasr el Nilo to which I had been invited; and the chances appeared to be considerably against my doing so. I determined, nevertheless, to make a push for it. A few minutes after we dropped our anchor, one boat came alongside us bringing some official. Thinking she would wait for him I was on my way to ask if he would take me ashore with him on his return, when a gentleman, whose companion I had been on most of our shore excursions, met me and said—"That boat is going to shore again immediately, and we are going in her, as we prepared for such a chance long ago: if you had only had your things ready we might have all gone together." Now I flatter myself, Bales, that I can be a little smart upon occasion, notwithstanding that you are sometimes pleased to animadvert severely on my ways of doing things. My friend on board evidently didn't form a lower opinion of me when, *ton d'apameibomenos*, I declared that I was in all respects ready, and required only to have my traps brought from the cabin. "Bravo!" he said, "then we go together and at once." Not knowing exactly the time of daybreak I had risen a little early, and had then improved the occasion by getting all my bag-

gave ready for a move, regarding the possibility of some sudden call. Nobody but we three (my friend's "we" included a young lady) was prepared to take passage in the first boat, in which we therefore put off, after taking leave of our kind skipper and his first officer. The rest of our party we expected to meet before long on shore.

My only opportunity of observing the harbour and works at Suez was while the ship was running to her anchorage, and while I pulled to shore. I could therefore only ascertain the positions of the several works of which I had heard or read; I could make no inspection of any. As regards the Canal Company, the only works absolutely required from them after carrying the Canal into the Gulf, were the formation of a channel through the head of the latter to deep water, and the construction of a mole to protect the southern entrance of the passage against high tides and strong southerly winds. Both of these are nearly complete. The stone of which the mole is constructed was quarried at Attaka, not far from Suez. I was glad to hear that, in dredging the channel to deep water, rock was not encountered: there were some reasons to apprehend that the bottom might be found to be rocky, and, in that case, the operations would have been less simple, and the expense far greater; but, happily, the difficulty did not occur. Besides the two indispensable works which I have mentioned, the Company have set about the reclamation of land from the sea, using for their embankments the mud which they dredge out of the ship channel. This reclamation is an adventure which, it is thought, will repay them. Although these are the only works of the Company at Suez, they are not the only works in progress there. A basin and a graving-dock are being constructed on the west side of the harbour, and a branch from the Suez and Cairo

Railway is extended to them over an artificial bank; but these last are the undertakings of the Messageries Imperiales, not of the Ship Canal Company.

Coming up to the anchorage at Suez, we steamed past a ship with a piece of new plank, just primed with paint, in her port quarter. It was our Russian friend that had been so anxious to get before us at Ismaïlia, bearing our card. It is to be hoped that the wood will be a long while getting dark, and that it may prove a wholesome *memento* of the indiscretion of pushing and elbowing.

A fresh breeze was blowing as we and our baggage were carried to the landing-wharf under the guidance of three Egyptians, and lying back in the boat was a rather luxurious repose. It was the last scrap or shadow of repose that we were destined to enjoy that day. Before we could land, a hundred pushing rascals swooped upon our luggage, and the packages were unceremoniously lifted and were about to be carried off, it was impossible to say whither, by this impudent horde. There was one only hope or chance that those trunks and bags would ever again form a united band, and that chance lay in the very promptest action against the marauders. Accordingly the heads and shins of the most active were assaulted (this was a language which they understood) just as they were making off with the prey; and they being discomfited, the slower villains gave in and dropped their spoil. With great difficulty and a thick stick the stuff was collected on the wharf under charge of the boatmen, who had not been paid, and who had not a chance of being paid until they should be relieved of this responsibility, as we made them understand, notwithstanding their cries of "Baksheesh! baksheesh!" which were strange to us then, but with which we were better acquainted before we were many hours older. In this state of

things it was deemed safe for my friend to proceed to the railway terminus to inquire concerning our chance of being conveyed to Cairo, while I, in command of the boatmen, kept watch over the lady and the property, maintaining with much effort a clear circle, round which were clamouring and gesticulating, and yearning but not daring to overstep it, as rude a crew as the fiends in Freischütz. The sun was getting high by this time, and it was hotter on the wharf than we had found it on the water. I began to realise how tedious service in the lines of Torres Vedras must have been. Heat, dullness, and inaction, with a watchful enemy outside. Now we have a little diversion. Two friends from the ship, Italians, have likewise found their way to the wharf. I send out a detachment to assist in rescuing them from the natives. They are rescued. Their goods are brought into the circle. The Italians are added to the garrison. We feel safe, but we are uneasy at the long tarrying of my English friend. He, however, comes at last, and brings the cheering information that a special train will start before long to take on the Khedivé's guests who have landed this morning from the Canal. This was a relief. We now cause our boatmen to engage a sufficient number, and no more, of porters to lift our traps, and one as a chief to be responsible for the rest, and to arrange the account. When this was done, and not till then, the boatmen were paid for their boat and time, and dismissed; and we, preceded by our band of porters, trudged off to the station. I shall never forget that station—there reigned there such a hurly-burly, such a Babel, such a blind unintelligent multitude, such an utter absence of anything like means to an end, such a worrying of officials by the crowd, such a resisting of the crowd by officials, such runaway trunks on the backs of Arabs, such wind-broken owners

in pursuit of their trunks, such frantic endeavours to be understood where every second man was a stranger, such threatenings, such wrath, such despair,—and all this supplemented with an incessant chorus of “Baksheesh! baksheesh!” As I write about it, the whole infernal rout comes back and makes me feel half mad again. But we had less reason to be mad than most other sufferers. It was bad at the best; but we, strong in our union, and with something of a plan of operations, had little to endure except a brisk shoving about, and an uncertain and unaccountable delay. At last a train of carriages was run up to the platform, and as there now appeared some prospect of getting away, we began to examine into the claims of the luggage-bearers, and to put together their guerdon, when it appeared that the boatmen had received the greater part of our silver, and the broken money of the whole party did not suffice for the payment of our debt. This seemed, however, no such insuperable difficulty at a railway station; and it being my turn now to explore the interior, my friend stood by the stuff, and by the more precious charge his daughter, while I worked my way through men of all the nations of the earth, and every species of travelling-mail that was ever invented, to the station office. There I saw a Turk at a desk. I took out a napoleon and placed it before him; he bowed, shook his head, and gave me the napoleon back. I took out a small silver coin to show that I wanted the napoleon changed into silver. He bowed again, raised his palms, and shook his head. I was not likely to get much out of this fellow; but I saw through an open door another Turk sitting at another desk. Him I approached and did obeisance, and then I took out my napoleon again and placed it upon the desk. The official laid his hand upon his breast, smiled sweetly and bowed. He was

evidently under the impression that I wished to bribe him into some rascality, and afraid, though not indisposed, to take the bait. I took out my napoleon and my small silver coin together, making signs that I wished the one converted into the other, when the official collapsed and his countenance fell. He had mistaken my meaning altogether, and the shock of finding that I was not tampering with him was too much. He peremptorily pushed aside my money, and waved me away. But I was getting desperate, and let him see that I was determined to be served, whereupon he opened his empty desk, invited me to inspect the interior, shrugged his shoulders, and smiled once more. My mission did not seem promising, and I was alarmed lest the train should be moving, or my friends should get into a carriage and I be unable to find them. Suddenly seized with this terror, I was making off, when in the passage I encountered a Mussulman of superior mien and dress—a hadji at least, I thought he must be from his appearance, and he looked and moved as one having authority. "Ha!" thought I, "here is the man that can open the till: the others are thieving understrappers, whom no man dares trust; this excellent man will give me silver." And I advanced to the hadji and addressed him in the French tongue according to my ability, which is not remarkable; for I will confess to you, Bales, that my French, though passing current in Manchester for something stunning, is in truth not of the very first water. I addressed the hadji, I have said, in French, but he replied politely, "*Nong parley Fronksay.*" I had another resource, my Italian, which is about as pure and fluent as my French. To this the hadji simply said again, "*Nong parley.*" I pulled out my napoleon, when, to my infinite discomfiture, the hadji shook his head as the understrapper had done,

waved his open hand deprecatingly towards me, raised his shoulders, and was turning away with a stately bow. I was beside myself with chagrin: I could not contain my vexation. "G—d d—n it!" I said (and you know, Bales, how perplexed I must have been ere such an expression could escape *my* lips), "I'll get change from some of you, or know the reason why." And then the hadji with much dignity answered and said, "Oh, if it's God-damning you're after, I can do that too." Once discover a man's *spécialité*, and you need have no difficulty in getting on with him. "Then, by that honest phrase," said I, "which proves that we have both been nurtured in a Christian land, I conjure you to change this napoleon into silver." "The devil a farthing have I got," said the hadji, "and you are not likely to get any here; this is only a goods station, ordinarily, and all the paying is done at Suez proper, which is farther up: they'll give you change up there." Then said I, "If you can't give me change, at least come and aid my party, if haply they still survive; there is an English lady among them, and it would be a charity to get her safely into a carriage." This draft the venerable hadji was ready to honour. Rolling stock, not money-taking, was evidently his department. "Come along, then," answered he, briskly; "I'll put that straight." My friends were just where I had left them, sore beset. "Well, you have been a long time getting change; we thought you were lost," said they. "I have not been idle for all that," I answered, composedly. "I have brought you a gentleman that will help to get us off." Whereupon one of our Italian friends, using his native tongue, addressed the hadji at about the same instant when the young lady said to me, "What does he speak—English?" The Saxon gutturals, especially when gliding over a silver tongue, can sometimes

effect more than the *lingua Toscana*. The hadji's fez was off in a second. "This way, ma'am, if you please," said he; and, unlocking a carriage, he installed the lady therein without more ado, inviting us to follow. But the change! How were the porters to be paid? Well, they were paid, I don't know how. Somebody, I think, remembered seven francs and a half in his travelling bag. It was lucky he didn't think of them before, or I shouldn't have dug out the hadji and sworn him to our service. In a trice we were all in one of the viceregal carriages, the last of us that entered being desired, before leaving the platform, to point out our luggage. "All right," said the hadji; "I'll see that properly stowed; you'll find it in No. 3 van when you get to Cairo; and now, if you please, I'll lock you up, and if you are wise you'll pull up all the blinds till you get out of the station, or you may get a lot of *foreigners* in with you." Having said which, the benevolent hadji lifted his fez once more, and turned the key upon us. I expected that when our deliverance was complete he would turn into a gnome, or a genie, or something of that sort, but he didn't. I saw him again in Cairo in a carriage behind a pair of horses, when I was driving the other way. I caught his eye, though, and waved my hand to him: he waved his in return. I'll take my—that is, I am positive, Bales, that he recognised me.

For some little while after we were locked up we kept our blinds closed as we had been directed, and it would have been well for us perhaps if we had continued to do so till fairly running away for Cairo. But somehow we never find precautions answer without persuading ourselves that the results would be just as satisfactory without the precautions, and so impunity leads to

foolhardiness. If Roderick Dhu had held on by his trusty targe; if Mrs Lot could have refrained from examining into the set of her *panier*; if Baba Abdallah* had kept the ointment off his right eye; if the royal Calendar had not opened the golden door; or if mother Eve had let the apple alone,—how differently would a good many histories be written! To compare small things with great, how much more elbow-room should we have preserved if we had kept our carriage closed! But then, who the deuce could? The hubbub from which we were withdrawn was going on outside us just as before. It was only natural that we should wish to see how it fared with those on the platform, and to take a cautious peep at them, as we suppose the spirits of the just to do at those who are still struggling, and screaming, and blundering, and failing here below. First we opened the merest chinks, then we made the chinks wider; nobody came in, and so at last we said, "Oh, it's all right, nobody wants to come in here," and let the blinds fairly down. *Mon Dieu!* wasn't there a rush two minutes after! The *foreigner* was upon us as the hadji had predicted, and he not only crowded up the carriage, but he crammed it full of his wonderful bags and bottles, and kept everybody uncomfortable while he was shelving and arranging the same. The carriage was double, or triple for aught I know, and by the time the train was fairly off, many of the invaders had vanished, whether into air or into other compartments I know not, but our carriage was comparatively clear again. And now we saw the town of Suez, but shot by it full speed. "Bravo!" we said, "the special train does not stop at Suez, why should it? And now we are all snug and comfortable till we get to

* See the story of "Baba Abdallah, the Blind Man," in the 'Thousand and One Nights.'

Cairo." Oh, how miserably deceived we were! It must have been a full mile beyond Suez where the train stopped; and from that distance it was backed with deliberate cruelty to the Suez station, where a scene of confusion, in comparison of which the scene at the goods station below was a quiet, orderly, and reasonable scene, ensued. Any attempt to describe the tumult would fail. Again the foreigner was upon us; again it rained trunks and carpet-bags, and cloaks and wicker-cases; and this time the carriages were so full that there was no subsidence or dispersion after the first rush, but rather an increased pressure; for the cross passages were thronged with passengers who never sat down except upon a handbox or a baby or anything they found lying about, and otherwise passed their time in driving in and pulling out leather cases and curiously-fashioned boxes below the seats and over our heads, keeping us from becoming inattentive or comatose. It was past noon before we escaped from the Suez station and its crush and clamour; but we did then start in earnest, and there was nothing there worth waiting for. The town is small and insignificant, with houses built of mud or native brick, or more rarely of European brick. To the right and left of it all is sand. The railway at first runs just behind the Canal-banks, but it leaves this direction and turns westward.

It was a comfort to be able at last to close the eyes and collect one's thoughts again after all this turmoil. Our party was strong enough to occupy the entire end of a carriage, so that the trunk and bag movers had no excuse for molesting us. I closed my eyes, I say, and in doing so thought of the weary longings of excellent old Job for only a moment's ease, and the very unusual use to which he would have put that moment. Things must have changed greatly since his days. *He* wished for peace that he might swallow down his spittle—a privi-

lege which nobody in Egypt seemed to appreciate, for they voided their rheum about our beds and about our paths, and contaminated all our ways.

It was a comfort to be able to think over all one had been seeing so rapidly for the last hundred hours, and the various opinions that one had heard uttered in regard thereto. Of this, at any rate, I think we may feel certain—the Canal is an established fact. It will disappear no more. Centuries ago, although great improvers possessed the energy and ability required for the construction of astonishing works of this kind, it might have been predicted how surely their surpassing labours would come to nought. The concentrated effort for execution could be made—it was the steady, continuous toil of maintenance that was hopeless. The moment man's vigilance should relax, nature, who never slumbered nor slept, would promptly use the occasion to fill in and exhaust and efface. In ages when a canal could be turned to but limited account, it was impossible that, in a country like Egypt, it could be made to pay the expense of keeping it up—impossible also that the state could at all times command the resources for that purpose. After the gigantic efforts of a Sesostrius or a Neco, succeeded probably a reactionary period, wherein ruin advanced beyond hope of retrieval. A great man could pierce the desert as a strong man rent the oak, but for both came the inevitable rebound—the proof of nature's persistent strength. To-day, however, the conditions are changed. It is not a single nation nor a contracted area that the maritime Canal is to benefit; the East and the West will join their powers to keep open the valuable strait. It would be presumption to say that our science exceeds the science of the glorious old Egyptians. We don't know how much they knew, and we have lately come down a peg or two in

our pretensions to superiority; but it is certain that the number of persons who feel an interest, no matter of what kind, in M. de Lesseps' Canal, is immensely greater than the number which could have known or cared about the former canals which were constructed with so much travail, only to perish, or to leave upon the earth traces sufficient to remind posterity of great failures. No man who has passed through the new work can have any other belief than that the civilised world will insist upon maintaining it, whether it can be made remunerative or not.

As to the prospects of the present Company, appearances are such as to hold an unprejudiced mind in doubt. It is clear to the most cursory observer that a great deal more work remains to be done, and of this the greatest part will be dredging. The uniform depth of 26 feet has not been attained, and it must be attained before the Canal can be utilised to the extent possible. We have lately seen that a ship drawing $17\frac{1}{2}$ feet of water went through without a rub, but I do not think such a passage could be relied on for ships drawing over 15 feet; and we know that to provide a sure passage for only ships of 15 feet draught and under is to offer no accommodation to the largest Indian traders, or to the Australian ships, whose tonnage is already very large, with a tendency to increase: it is, consequently, to stop short at the very line beyond which lies the greatest chance of remuneration and profit. It may be taken for granted that the deepening of the Canal, wherever required, will be at once proceeded with. Another labour not absolutely imperative like the deepening, but nevertheless very desirable indeed, is the provision of wide basins where ships can pass each other, as at Kantara. These will, no doubt, be made; indeed I think it probable that the breadth of the whole Canal will some day be doubled, or, what may perhaps be better, a

second parallel canal will be formed. These two services—viz., deepening and widening—are those which principally affect traffic, and which the public will insist upon having done. As regards other operations, they are of such a nature as to leave the Company a choice between a large immediate outlay and a continued drain for works of maintenance. I allude to such works as paving the side slopes to resist the wash of the water, erecting barriers to intercept the drifting sand, and making branches from the freshwater canal to increase vegetation in the neighbourhood.

By the time all requirements are provided for, an expenditure of £20,000,000 will probably have been incurred. And we next encounter the question, How can the traffic through the Canal be made to yield an adequate return for an outlay so enormous? The answer which most Englishmen give to this question is, that the Canal cannot possibly pay the original shareholders, and that the attempt to make it remunerative by levying heavy tolls will have an effect directly the opposite of what would be intended—i.e., the tolls will render the route of Suez more expensive than the long sea-voyage by the Cape of Good Hope. Ten francs per ton, they say, is too large a charge; and before the public can benefit by the Canal, the possession and management of it must have passed to other hands. When the tolls can be reduced to five francs the ton, then the route by Suez will be incontestably the cheapest between England and India. But the present shareholders cannot afford to pass freights at five francs a-ton; therefore they will find it most for their interest to incur at once the inevitable loss, parting with their property in the Canal at a fraction of its value, and making over the management at a low rate to a new set of men who may be able to repay themselves out of moderate tolls.

I cannot adduce one word of commercial or arithmetical argument to oppose to the foregoing.* I say that to those who walk wholly by sight the case seems fairly put against the hopes of the promoters. But there *are* men who walk by FAITH; and if ever there can be an occasion when it may be pardonable, nay, almost a duty, to hazard something on the assurance of other men, this is surely the opportunity. Against hope, against prophecy, against figures, against demonstration, M. de Lesseps and his *confrères* have kept tryste and kept time, answering objections by facts, not words. Men who have so frequently proved themselves to be in the right, notwithstanding the grave and specious objections brought against them, are surely entitled to some little attention when they persist in putting forward a decided opinion! As far as I can ascertain, they have never yet receded from the assertion that the Canal will speedily repay its original promoters. It should be remembered that lookers-on may, in their caution, have over-estimated the expense of work yet to be done, and that they may take a too unfavourable view of the present capabilities of the Canal. It is quite right to be cautious, but it may not be quite right to put forward the mere suggestions of caution as of equal weight with the knowledge and the guarantees of men who have the best possible means of information, and who are content to stake well-earned reputations on their correctness in this particular. I will say once more to you, Bales, what I have already said to many,—"I cannot prove these men to be right; but, until they actually are seen to fail, I *will* not believe them to be wrong."

"Hollosa! what's the matter? where

are we!" "Well, we are at the dinner station, and there is a halt of twenty minutes—will you dine?" Certainly we would dine, and be very glad of the chance; after we get to Cairo we shall have barely time to dress for the ball, if we have that. Let us dine here by all means. And we did dine. How we fared I do not exactly remember, but I believe pretty well. What I do remember is, that we paid not one sou for either the dinner or the conveyance to Cairo.

It was getting time now to leave off musing and to look about, for the country was assuming an appearance very different from that which hitherto had constantly met us. The same sandy waste had continued many stages from Suez. The surface of the ground, it is true, began to be irregular, and hills, showing much stratification, were frequent; but the soil, high or low, was barren, and its complexion pink throughout. The atmosphere was pink. Stone, sand, and clay could be seen, but no vegetation. At length the character of the landscape began to change as we lessened our distance from Cairo. Muddy fields first, and then fields with pools of water lingering about in places, attested that we were within the limits of the Nile's inundation. In some places the water had been retained by small dams when the river subsided, but in most lands there was just the slimy surface which the river left, unbroken as yet by spade or plough. When we were fairly in the Delta, where, I suppose, the fields had been thoroughly and speedily saturated, and where there could be no inducement to prolong by art the fertilising process, ploughing was to be seen, and green crops. Ahead of us appeared suddenly what seemed a long continuous fence made of tall

* The case of the Canal as viewed by most of our countrymen was ably put by Mr Charles Clarke, president of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, in a paper which he read before the members of the Chamber and their friends, on the 14th December 1869.

bamboos, but what proved to be the curved masts of very many Egyptian boats, bending some one way some the other, so as to resemble the crossed poles of a fence. We were passing a canal or a natural branch of the Nile. And after this we were speedily in a rich green country, covered with young crops of maize, sugar, wheat, plantains, cotton, and, if I mistake not, potatoes. Groves of trees, too, refreshed the sight—cocoa-nuts, golden oranges, and bunches of dates hanging plentifully among them. This Delta into which we were now entering must be exceptionally rich; there is an untold depth of fat alluvial soil, and a certain manuring and irrigation done by nature in the most perfect manner. I say certain advisedly, Bales, not at all forgetting the seven years of famine; so don't cavil. I believe the said seven years were a most exceptional judgment, and that since the days of Joseph there has not been a total failure of the inundation, certainly not failures for successive years. Now and then the rise of the river is very insufficient, and for that year in which the insufficiency occurs the country suffers accordingly, but the succeeding year generally yields the accustomed fruits. The soil of the Delta may, I think, be compared to that of Guiana, the husbandman in both places working ground that great rivers have been forming for countless ages. Only, in the former there is a temperate climate, and, by the provision of nature, only one harvest in the year; in the latter there is a tropical sun to ripen at all seasons, copious rains with only short intervals throughout the year, and opportunities of taking off three crops in twelve months.

I had settled myself in my seat, and become lazy and pensive when it grew dark. I took no note of time. The intelligence came rather suddenly upon me that we had reached the Cairo Station, and I had to rouse myself. The luggage

was got out with some trouble and labour, but without accident or loss—a circumstance most creditable to the Railway, after such a scramble. We inquired for a carriage, but were told there was no such thing to be had. We had, however, surmounted too many difficulties that day to be easily persuaded of impossibilities; and after waiting a little, we got a carriage for ourselves and a truck for our luggage. We got also the services of a paragon of a true believer, who got the packages on to the trucks as smartly as it could be done, poising heavy trunks on his shoulder and running with them as if they were hat-boxes. He was a smart man, too, in the matter of *baksheesh*; for, being invited to come to our hotel in the morning to be paid, in order that the time and annoyance of settling with him in the dark might be saved, and that we might have the chance of engaging his valuable services again in the morning, he plainly expressed his doubt of ever getting any payment if he should let us slip now; said he was a poor man and couldn't afford to work for nothing, and insisted upon immediate liquidation. Away, at length, go carriage and truck, and we are not long in reaching the Oriental Hotel, which in the gas-light looks a very handsome building. We found the lobby in confusion, the manager distracted, the servants rushing hither and thither, a very Babel of swearing, entreating, protesting, and repudiating, prevalent. Luggage was coming in in heaps, but none being cleared off. Some fuss about rooms, but we had telegraphed for ours, and finally found we were provided for. With considerable impertunity the despairing manager is induced to get the lady's luggage carried to her room. She is out of the throng, fortunately, and the rest of us separate our property into parcels, and wish that it may, some time or other, be moved, as we all hope that we shall go some day to heaven. I caught

sight of an address-board, and, looking thereon, perceived an imitation of the name Scamper against 91. I assumed an official air and tried to overawe the manager; but he was past the stage where bullying could avail. Then I laid hands upon a passing Mussulman, and refused to let him move in any direction except to my luggage. He protested: I compelled; I threatened personal chastisement. He saw that I meant to lay on, and took up a portmanteau; at sight of which a brother *fellah*, and a very smart *fellah* too, mysteriously appeared to his aid, and took up another article, as when, after a first vulture has perched upon a carcass, a second vulture in three seconds emerges from the depths of space and perches on it too. They ascend and disappear. I guard the remainder of my property till they return. I and the last packages go up together to 91, where I find water and light, unpack and wash; then I lock the door and descend. I afterwards found that lords, ladies, baronets, and squires had been obliged to double and treble up, and that the hall, writing-room, and every corner of the house were occupied by roomless destitutes. I thought I couldn't be such an utter muff after all! At ten o'clock we met at tea in the *salle*; at half-past ten we went off, nothing daunted by our trials, in all of which we were more than conquerors, to dress for the ball. Five napoleons for a carriage! Well, it will take more than that to stop us now. Soon after eleven we are off to the palace, having passed on the stairs as we descended the rest of the party from our ship, tired and just arrived, having all their fight about rooms and luggage yet to come, and perceiving that for them the ball was a perished hope.

The Kasr el Nilo, the palace where the ball was to be given, was soon reached. It was magni-

ficently illuminated, and at the first step within its gates one was convinced that better order and a more refined style reigned here than at the ball in Ismaïlia. Our invitation-cards were scrutinised at the door, and when these were found satisfactory we were introduced with much ceremony. The Viceroy had, however, left the station in which he had been receiving his guests, just before we arrived; and glad enough, I should think, the poor man must have been to go off to comparative repose with the Emperor and the Crown-Prince in a saloon that was *réserve*. There was no intolerable crowd here, no tearing away of ladies' garments, no licence as to dress. There were all the observances and all the magnificence of a State ball. The dancing-room was spacious and splendid; ornamented in the Saracenic style, four-square or nearly so, and very lofty. The refreshment-room was large and well ventilated, with plenty of attendants, and every requirement within easy reach. The supper-room was sumptuously provided, and admitted of every guest being seated; while he might regale himself to his heart's content, as I did, for it was eight or ten hours since I had eaten anything worthy to be called a meal, and then I had eaten in haste, with my loins girded, of not the most delicate viands. The suite of drawing-rooms was very elegantly furnished, and all the rooms were well lighted. The beauty of the ladies (none of whom, of course, were Mohammedan) was not remarkable; though, to do them justice, many of them had taken infinite pains to appear to advantage, and by no means acquiesced in the award of nature. Powder had been profusely used, and certain other beautifiers laid on with the prodigality of a Rembrandt. In the course of the evening I had the pleasure of meeting again the German acquaintance in whose company, as I told

you,* I crossed the Brenner. He was full of projects for sight-seeing, on many of which action was afterwards taken. And so, with one agreeable diversion after another, I managed quite to forget the long tiresome day that I had passed, and to be really indifferent about going to bed. The morning was somewhat advanced before we thought of retiring, but we had to think of it at last. As we were going to enter our carriage, my German friend came up and said that there remained something which we had omitted to see, and that we must give five more minutes—that was all that would be required to avoid a life-long remorse. Thus urged we moved off once more, not into the palace, but round an angle of it, out of the glare of the lamps, and were suddenly in solitude and quiet. In two minutes we stood on a terrace looking over a balustrade across a placid water. That water, Bales, was the mighty Nile under the light of the full moon. Surely it was a spell of Egypt; the sudden sight, the rush of thoughts en-

tangled, many-figured, overwhelming, seized on the mind, and stirred every pulse. This awful stream, knit to all past Time, echoing with a thousand great names, brimful of fancies, the nurse of her that nursed all human knowledge—there it rolled, past banks that had felt the tread of sages and conquerors, prophets, magicians, builders, mighty men that were of old, men of renown. And I was standing where once Menes stood and the many Pharaohs, where Moses wrought wonders, where Cleopatra stepped from her gilded galley. As I gazed, every ripple reflected the beams, which ran in quivering streaks of light along the sacred waters; the rich moonshine gleamed on masonry and shipping; the shadows fell so dark and sharp that they seemed substances; there was not a wave in the air, not a vapour in the sky. Bales, my boy, it was — but I cannot describe what I felt, neither can I pass now from the Nile to meaner things till I sleep. After rest I will tell you more of Egypt. *Au revoir*.—Yours,
SCAMPER.

* This must have been in some former letter which Mr Bales has not sent to us.

JOHN.—PART IV.

CHAPTER XI.

THE room was in its usual partially lighted state, with darkness in all the corners, half-seen furniture, and ghostly pictures on the walls. A minute ago the servants had been there in a line kneeling at prayers—dim beings, something between pictures and ghosts. And now they had just stolen out in procession, and Dr Mitford had seated himself at the table for the regulation ten minutes which he spent with his family before retiring for the night. Kate had drawn a low chair close to the table, and was looking up at him with a little quiver of anxiety about her lips and eyes. These two—the old man's venerable white head throwing reflections from it in the soft lamp-light, the young girl all radiant with beauty and feeling—were the only ones within the circle of light. Outside of it stood two darker shadows, John and his mother. Mrs Mitford was in a black gown, and the bright tints of her pleasant face were neutralised by the failure of light. Two in the brightness and two in the gloom—a curious symbolical arrangement. And behind them all was the great open window, full of darkness, and the garden with all its unseen sweetness outside.

Dr Mitford was the only unconscious member of this curious party. He had no suspicion and no alarm. He stretched his legs, which were not long, out comfortably before him, and leant back composedly, now on the elbows, now on the back, of his chair.

"Well, Miss Kate, and what have you been doing with yourself all the evening?" he said, in his blissful ignorance. The other three gave a simultaneous gasp. What would he think when he heard? This thought, however, pressed hardest upon one. John's mind

was laden with a secret which as yet nobody divined; and even Kate was not aware what a struggle was going on within him. He was about to tear himself from all the superstitions and a great many of the affections of his past life. The woman for whom he was about to do this did not understand it. But he knew and realised every point of the struggle he had to go through. Speech almost forsook him as he stood in that moment of suspense, with such a crisis before him. Neither Kate nor his mother could see how pale he grew, and even if there had been light enough, John was not a handsome pink-and-white youth upon whom a sudden pallor shows. He might have shirked it even now, or left it to his mother, or chosen a more convenient moment. But he was uncompromising in his sense of necessities, and now was the moment at which it must be done. He went round to his father's right hand and stood between him and Kate.

"Father," he said, "I have got something to tell you. I have done what perhaps was not prudent, but I trust you will not think it was not honourable. I have fallen in love with Kate."

"God bless my soul!" said Dr Mitford, instantly abandoning his comfortable attitude, and sitting straight up in his bewilderment. He was so startled that he looked from one to another, and finally turned to his wife, as a man does who has referred every blunder and surprise of a lifetime to her for explanation. It was an appealing half-reproachful glance. Here was something which no doubt she could have prevented or staved off from him. "My dear, what is the meaning of this?" he said.

"It is I who must tell you that," said John, firmly. "I have a great

deal to tell you—a great deal to explain to my mother as well as you. But this comes first of all—I love Kate. I saved her, you know; and then it seemed so natural that she should be mine. How could she have taken any one else than me who would have died for her? And see, father, she has consented,” said the poor fellow, taking Kate’s hand, and holding it in both his. His eyes were full of tears, and there was a smile on his face. It was that mingling of pathos and of triumph which marks passion at the highest strain.

“God bless my soul!” said Dr Mitford again, and this time he rose to his feet in his amazement. “My dear, if you heard this was going on, why did not you tell me? Consented! why, she is a mere child, and her father trusted her to us. Miss Kate, you must perceive he is talking nonsense—you must have turned his head. This can’t go any further. The boy must be mad to think of such a thing.”

“Then I am mad too,” said Kate, softly. “Oh, please, do not be angry with us—we could not help it. Oh, Mrs Mitford, say a word for John!”

And then there came a strange pause. The mother said nothing. She stood in the shade holding back, insensible, as it seemed, to this appeal; and on the other side of the table were the young pair, holding each other fast. Kate had added her other hand to the one John had taken, and their fingers intertwined and clasped each other with an eloquence which was beyond words. As for Dr Mitford, he came to himself slowly while this scene passed before him. A ray of intelligence passed over his face. He was a sensible man, and not one to throw away the good the gods provided. Gradually it became apparent to him that there are times when youthful folly brings about results such as mature wisdom could scarcely have conceived possible. From the first

stupefaction his look brightened into surprise, then into interest and half-disguised approval. The light of the lamp fell full upon Kate’s upturned face, which was pleading, yet not over-anxious, and upon the clasped hands, and the tall shadow which bent over her. Dr Mitford drew a long breath, and when he spoke again, his voice was wonderfully changed.

“Then you must be more to blame than he is, my dear young lady, for you have not the same temptation,” he said, with a little flurry and excitement, but not much apparent displeasure. And then he made a pause, and looked at them with his brow contracted as if they were a book. “I don’t understand all this. Do you mean to tell me you are engaged, and it is not three weeks yet——”

“It did not want three weeks,” said John, “nor three days. Father, you see it is done now; she has consented, and she ought to know best.”

“I am utterly bewildered,” said Dr Mitford, but his tone softened more and more. “My dear, have you nothing to say to this? is it as unexpected to you as it is to me? Miss Kate, you understand it is no reluctance to receive you that overwhelms me, but the surprise—and—— My dear, is it possible you have nothing to say?”

“It is her father I am thinking of,” said Mrs Mitford, suddenly, with a sharp jarring sound of emotion in her voice. And so it was; but not entirely that. She seized upon the only feasible objection that occurred to her to cover her general consternation and sense of dismay.

“Yes, to be sure,” said Dr Mitford. “John, I wish you had spoken to Mr Crediton first. I shall explain to him that I knew nothing about it—nothing at all till the last moment. I fear you have taken away from me even the power of pleading your cause; though, Miss Kate,” he said, rising

and going up to her with the urbanity which was so becoming to him, "if you had no fortune, I should take the liberty to kiss you, and tell you my son had made a charming choice."

"Then kiss me now," said Kate, suddenly detaching herself from John, and holding out her hands to his father. Dr Mitford gave a little irresolute glance behind him to see what his wife was thinking; and then after a moment's hesitation, melted by the pretty face lifted to him, by the fortune which he had thus set forward as a drawback to her, and by the mingled sentiment, false and true, of the occasion, took the pretty hands and bent over her and kissed her forehead.

"My dear," he said, with effusion, "I could not have hoped for so sweet a daughter-in-law. You would be as welcome to me as the flowers in May." And then Dr Mitford paused, and the puckers came back to his forehead, and he turned round on his heel as on a pivot, and faced his son. "But don't for a moment suppose, John, that I can approve of *you*. I will not adopt your cause with Mr Crediton. Good heavens! he might think it was a scheme. He might think——"

"*That* he could never think," said Mrs Mitford, not able to restrain her impatience. "He may be angry, and blame everybody, and do away with it—but he could not think that."

"If I have done wrong, let it come upon me," said John, hoarsely. "But, Kate, come! you have had enough to bear." He was thinking of her only, not of what any one else had to bear; and it was hard upon Mrs Mitford. And it was hard upon her, very hard, to take the interloper into her arms again, and falter forth a blessing on her. "He is everything in the world to me," she whispered, with her lips on Kate's cheek. "And what should his wife be? But my heart seems

dead to-night." "Dear mamma, don't hate me. I will not take him away from you; and I have no mother," Kate whispered back. And Mrs Mitford held her close for a moment, and cried, and was lightened at her heart. But this little interlude was unknown to the two men who stood looking on. John led his betrothed away into the hall, where he lingered one moment before he said good-night. What he said to her, or she to him, is not much to our present purpose. They lingered and whispered, and clung to each other as most of us have done once in our lives—and could not make up their minds to separate. While this went on, Dr Mitford made a little turn about the table in his excitement, and thrust up the shade from the lamp, as if to throw more light upon the matter. He was in a fidget, and a little alarmed by what his son had done, yet prepared to feel that all was for the best.

"My dear, is it possible you knew of this?" he said, rubbing his hands. "What a very odd thing that it should have happened so! Bless my soul! she is a great heiress. Why, Mary," giving a glance round him, and lowering his voice a little, "who could have thought that lump of a boy would have had the sense to do so well for himself?"

"Oh, Dr Mitford, for heaven's sake don't speak so! Whatever he intends, my boy never thought of that."

"I don't suppose he did," said the father, still softly rubbing his hands; "I don't suppose he did—but still, all the same. Why, bless my soul! Mary—— To be sure it may be unpleasant with Mr Crediton. If he could think for one moment that we had any hand in it——"

"He cannot think that," said Mrs Mitford. A sense that there was something more to be told kept her breathless and incapable of speech. But it gave her a little

consolation to be able to defy Mr Crediton's suspicions. It was a safety-valve, so far as it went.

"I hope not—I sincerely hope not. I should tell him at once that it is—well—yes—contrary to my wishes. Of course it would be a great thing for John. He is not the sort of boy to make his way in the world, and this would give him such a start. Unless her father is very adverse, Mary, I should be inclined to think that everything is for the best."

"You are so ready to think that, Dr Mitford," said his wife, sitting down suddenly in her excitement, feeling that her limbs could no longer support her. "But I am afraid I am not so submissive," she added, with a little burst of feeling, putting up her hand to her eyes.

"You don't mean to say you don't see the advantages of it?" said her husband; "or is it the girl you object to? She seems to me to be a very nice girl."

"Oh, hush!" said Mrs Mitford; "do not let him hear you. Oh my boy! my boy!"

John came in with his face just settling out of the melting tenderness of his good-night into the resolution which was necessary for what was now before him. He saw that his mother, half hidden in her chair, had covered her eyes with her hand; and his father stood by the table, as if he had been arguing, or reasoning, or explaining something. It was not an attitude very unusual with Dr Mitford; but explaining things to his wife, notwithstanding her respect for him, was not an effort generally attended with much success. Perhaps, however, the subjects he selected were not within her range.

"I tell you, my dear," he said, as John approached, with the air of concluding an argument, "that if Mr Crediton does not object, I shall think John has made an excellent choice."

"Thank you, father," John said,

and held out his hand; while the mother, whose anxieties on the subject went so much deeper, sat still on her chair and covered her face, and felt a sharp pang of irritation strike through her. She had trained the boy to be very respectful, very dutiful, to his father; but Dr Mitford spent much of his time in his study, and there could not be much sympathy between them; yet the two stood clasping hands while she was left out. It was the strangest transposition of parts. She could not understand it, and it jarred through her with sudden pain. Nor did John seek her after that, as surely, she thought, he must do. He stood between them in front of the table, and kept looking straight, not at either of them, but at the light.

"I have had something else on my mind for a long time," he said, and his lips were parched with excitement. "Father, it is a long affair: will you sit down again and listen to what I have got to say?"

"If it is about this business," said his father, "I have told you already, John, that nothing can be done without her father's consent; and I have not time, you know, to waste in talk. Tell your mother what it is; I shall have it all from her. I have given you my consent and approbation conditionally. Your mother, surely, can do all the rest."

"Wait," said John; "pray, wait a little. It is not about this. I want to tell you and my mother both together. I should not have the courage," he added, with the excitement of self-defence, "to speak to you separately. It has nothing to do with this. It was a burden upon my mind before I ever saw Kate. And now that everything has come to a crisis, I must speak. It cannot be delayed any longer. Hear me for this once."

Mrs Mitford gave a stifled groan. It was very low, but the room was very silent, and the sound startled all of them—even herself. It

sounded somehow as if it had come in through the window out of the dark. She raised herself up suddenly and opened her eyes, and uncovered her face, and looked at them both, lest any one should say it was she. Yes, she had foreseen it all the time; she had felt it, since ever that girl came to the house—which was not, it must be admitted, entirely just.

"You have brought me up to be a clergyman," said John, still more and more hurried, "and there was a time when I accepted the idea as a matter of course; but since I have grown older, things are different. I cannot bear to disappoint you, and overturn all your plans; but, father, think! Can I undertake to say from the altar things I cannot believe? Ought I to do that? If I were a boy, it might be different, and I might learn better; but at my age——"

"Age," said the Doctor, impatiently, "what is all this about? Age; of course you are a boy, and nothing else. And why shouldn't you believe? Better men than you have gone over all that ground, and settled it again and again."

"But, father, I cannot be guided by what other people think. I must judge for myself. I cannot do it! I have tried to carry out your expectations until the struggle has been almost more than I could bear, and I cannot do it. Forgive me: it has come to be a question of possibility——"

"A question of fiddlestick!" cried the Doctor, angrily, walking about the room. "I tell you, better men than you have settled all that. Of course you think your doubts are quite original, and never were heard of before. Nonsense! I have not the slightest doubt they have been refuted a hundred times over. Stuff! Mary, is it to be expected I should give in to him?—just when it was a comfort to think he was provided for, and all that. Are you such a fool as to think you can meet Mr Crediton with this

story? Is he to understand at once that you mean to live on your wife?"

"I will never live on my wife," said John, stung in the tenderest point.

"Oh, Dr Mitford, don't speak to him so," said his mother, rising up and throwing herself metaphorically between the combatants. "Do you think if he had not had a very strong reason he would have said this to us, knowing how it would grieve us? Oh, let him tell us what he means!"

"I know what he means," said Dr Mitford, "better than he does himself. He thinks it is a fine thing to be a sceptic. His father believes what he can't believe, and that makes him out superior to his father. And then here is Kate Crediton with all her money——"

"Father!" cried John, pale with rage.

"Oh, hush, hush!" said Mrs Mitford; "that has nothing to do with it. Oh, don't let us bring her name in to make bitterness. John, John, do not say anything hasty! We had so set our hearts upon it. And, dear, your papa might explain things to you if you would but have patience. He never knew you had any doubts before."

"Mother," said John, with tears in his eyes, turning to her, "it is like you to take my part."

"But he must have a very strong reason," she went on, without heeding him, addressing her husband, "to be able to make up his mind to disappoint us so. Don't be hard upon our poor boy. If you were to argue with him, and explain things—I am sure my John did not mean any harm. Oh, consider, John!—Fanshawe, that you were born in—how could you bear to see it go to others? And the poor people that know you so well—— Dr Mitford, when all this is over, and—strangers gone, and we are quiet again, you will take the boy with you, and go over everything and explain——"

"The fact is," said the Doctor, suddenly going to the side table and selecting his candle, "that I have no time to waste on such nonsense. You can have what books you want out of my library, and I hope your own sense and reflection will carry the day. Not a word more. You are excited, I hope, and that is the cause of this exhibition. No; of course I don't accept what you have said. Speak to your mother—that is the best thing you can do. I have got my paper to finish, so good-night."

John stood aghast, and watched his father go out at the door, impatient and contemptuous of the explanation it had cost him so much to make. And when he turned to his mother, expecting her sympathy, she was standing by him transformed, with a gleam of fire in her eyes such as he had never seen there; a flush on her face, and her hands held up with indignant, almost threatening, vehemence.

"How could you do it?" she cried—"how could you have the heart to do it? To us that have had no thought but for you! Look what sacrifices we have made all your life that you should have everything. Look how your father has worked at his papers—and all that we have done to secure your prosperity. And for the sake of a silly girl you had never seen a month ago! Oh, God forgive me! what shall I do?"

And she sank down on her chair and covered her face, and burst into angry weeping. It was not simple sorrow, but mortification, rage, disappointment—a combination of feelings which it was impossible for John to identify with his mother. She had been defending him but a moment before. It had given him a sense of the most exquisite relief to find her on his side. He had turned to her without doubt or fear, expecting that she would cry a little, perhaps, and lament over him, and be wist-

fully respectful of his doubts, and tender of his sufferings. And to see her confronting him, flushed, indignant, almost menacing! His consternation was too great for words. "Mother," he said, faltering, "you are mistaken—indeed you are mistaken!" and stopped short, with mingled resentment and humiliation. Why should Kate be supposed to have anything to do with it? And yet in his heart he knew that she had a great deal to do with it. Her—but not her fortune, as his father thought. Curse her fortune! John, who had always been so gentle, walked up and down the room like a caged lion, with a hundred passions in his heart. He was wild with mortification, and with that sense of the intolerable which accompanies the first great contrariety of a life. Nothing (to speak of) had ever gone cross with him before. But now his mother herself had turned against him—could such a thing be possible?—and the solid earth had been rent away from under his feet.

Neither of them knew how long it was before anything was said. Mrs Mitford sobbed out her passion, and dried her tears, and remained silent; and so did John, till the air seemed to stir round him with wings and rustlings as of unseen spectators. It was only when it had become unbearable that he broke the silence. "Mother," he said, with a voice which even to his own ears sounded harsh and strange, "you have always believed me till now. When I tell you that this has been in my heart ever since I left Oxford—and while I was at Oxford—and that I have always refrained from telling you, hoping that when the time of decision came I might feel differently—will you refuse to believe me now?"

Mrs Mitford was incapable of making any reply. "Oh, John," she said—"oh, my boy!" shaking her head mournfully, while the

tears dropped from her eyes. She did not mean to imply that she would not believe him. Poor soul! she did not very well know what she meant, except utter confusion and misery; but that was the meaning which her gesture bore to him.

"I have done nothing to deserve this," he said, with indignation. "You have a right to be as severe upon me as you like for disobeying your wishes, but you have no right to disbelieve your son."

"Oh, John, what is the use of speaking?" said Mrs Mitford. "Disbelieve you! why should I disbelieve you? The best thing is just to say nothing more about it, but let me break my heart and take no notice. What am I that I should stand in your way? Your father will get the better of it, for he has so many things to occupy him; but I will never get the better of it. Don't take any notice of me; the old must give up, whatever happens—I know that—and the young must have their day."

"Yes; the young must have their day," said John, severely; and then his heart smote him, and he came and knelt down by his mother's side. "But why should you be in such despair?" he said. "Mother, I am not going away from you. Though I should not be curate of Fanshawe Regis, may not we all be very happy together?—as happy in a different way? Mother, dear, I thought you were the one to stand by me, whoever should be against me."

"And so I will stand by you," she sobbed, permitting him to take her hand and caress it. "Nobody shall say I do not stand up for my own boy. You shall have your mother for your defender, John, if it should kill me. But oh, my heart is broke!" she cried, leaning her head against his shoulder. "Now and then even a boy's mother must think of herself. All my dreams were about you, John. I have not been so happy, not so very happy, in my life. Other

women have been happier than me, and more thought of, that perhaps have done no more than I have. But I have always said to myself, I have my John. I thought you would make it up to me; I thought my happiness had all been saving up—all waiting till I was growing old, and needed it most. Don't cry, my dear. I would not have you cry, you that are a man, as if you were a girl. Oh, if I had had a girl of my own, I think I could have borne it better. But she would have gone off and married too. There, there! I am very selfish speaking about my feelings. I will never do it again. What does anything matter to me if you are happy? My dear, go to bed now, and don't take any more notice. It was the shock, you know. In the morning you will see I shall have come to myself."

"But, mother, it matters most to me that you should understand me," cried John—"you who have been everything to me. Do you think I am going to forget who has trained me, and taught me, and guided me since ever I remember? What difference will this make between you and me? Does giving up the Church mean giving up my mother? Never, never! I should give up even my own conscience, whatever it cost me, could I think that."

"Oh, John, my dear, perhaps if things were rightly explained——?" she faltered, raising her voice with a little spring of hope, and looking anxiously in his face. But she saw no hope there, and then her voice grew tremulous and solemn. "John, do you think it will bring a blessing on you to turn back after you have put your hand to the plough, and forsake God for the world? Is that the way to get His grace?"

"Will God be better pleased with me if I stand up at the altar before Him and say a lie?" said John. "Mother, you who are so true and just, you cannot think what you say."

"But it is truth you have to speak, and not lies," said the unused controversialist, with a thousand wistful pleas, which were not arguments, in her eyes; and then she threw her tender arms round her son, and clasped him to her. "Oh, my boy, what can I say? It is because of the shock and my not expecting it. I think my heart is broken. But go to bed, my dear, and think no more of me for to-night."

"I cannot bear you saying your heart is broken," cried John. "Mother, don't be so hard upon me. I must act according to my conscience, whatever I may have to bear."

"Oh, John! God knows I don't mean to be hard upon you!" cried Mrs Mitford, stung with the reproach. And then she rose up trembling, her pretty grey hair ruffled about her forehead, her eyes wet and shining with so great a strain of emotion. Thus she stood for a moment, looking at him with such a faint effort at a smile as she could accomplish. "Perhaps things will look different in the morning," she said, softly, "if we say our prayers with all our hearts before we go to bed."

And with that she drew her son

to her, and gave him his good-night kiss, and went away quickly without turning round again. John was left master of the field. Neither father nor mother had any effectual forces to bring against him—they had both retired with a postponement of the question, which weakened their power and strengthened his. And he had attained what seemed to him the greatest happiness in life—the love of the girl whom he loved. And yet he was nothappy. He walked slowly up and down the deserted room, and stood at the open window, and breathed in the breath of the lilies and the dew, and remembered that Kate was his, and yet was not happy. How incredible that was, and yet true! When he left the room he caught himself moving with stealthy footsteps, as if something lay dead in the house. And something did lie dead. The hopes that had centred in him had got their death-blow. The house had lost what had been its heart and strength. He became vaguely, sadly conscious of this, as he stole away in the silence to his own room, and shut himself up there, though it was still so early, with his heart as heavy as lead within his breast.

CHAPTER XII.

Next morning the household met at breakfast with that strange determination to look just as usual, and ignore all that had happened, which is so common in life. Kate, to be sure, did not know what had happened. She was aware of nothing but her own engagement which could have disturbed the family calm; and it filled her with wonder, and even irritation, to see how pale John looked, who ought to have been at the height of happiness, and how little exultation was in his voice. "He is thinking of what he is to say to papa," was the thought that passed through her mind; and this thought fortunately

checked her momentary displeasure. Mrs Mitford was paler still, and her eyes looked red, as if she had been crying; but instead of being subdued or cross, she was in unusually gay spirits, it seemed to Kate—talking a great deal more than usual, even laughing, and attempting little jokes which sat very strangely upon her. The only conclusion Kate could draw from the general aspect of affairs was, that they were all extremely nervous about the meeting with Mr Crediton. And, on the whole, she was not very much surprised at this. She herself was nervous enough. His only child, for whom he might have hoped the

most splendid of marriages—who was so much admired, and had so little excuse for throwing herself away—that she should engage herself thus, like any school-girl, to a clergyman's son, with no prospects, nor money, nor position, nor anything! Kate looked at John across the table, and saw that he was very far from handsome, and owned to herself that it was next to incredible. Why had she done it? Looking at him critically, he was not even the least good-looking, nor distinguished, nor remarkable in any way. One might say he had a good expression, but that was all that could be said for him. And Kate felt that it would be incredible to her father. Dr Mitford was the only one of the party who was like himself; but then he was an old man, and cold-blooded. Kate recovered her complacency by this strain of reasoning. And but for this she might have been a little annoyed by their looks, which were not looks of triumph.

"I want you to let me drive the phaeton over to the station to meet papa," she said. "Please do, Dr Mitford. Oh, I am not in the least afraid of the pony. I have been making friends with him, and giving him lumps of sugar, and I do want to be the first to see papa."

"My dear Miss Kate, I am so sorry the phaeton has only room for two," said the Doctor. "If you were to go there would be no seat for your excellent father; but it is only half an hour's drive—can not you wait till he reaches here?"

"But, dear Dr Mitford, I always drive him from the station at home," cried Kate.

"You are not at home now, my dear young lady," said the Doctor, shaking his head. "We must give you back safe and sound into his hands. The groom will go. No, Miss Kate, no—we must not frighten your worthy father. You must consider what had so nearly happened a month ago. No, no; it requires a man's hand——"

"But the pony is so gentle," pleaded Kate.

"I know the pony better than you do," Dr Mitford said, shaking his head, "and he wants a man's hand. My dear, you must be content to wait your good father here."

The Doctor was the only one who appeared unmoved. He had put on all his usual decorous solemnity along with his fresh stiff white tie, and highly-polished creaking boots. But even he made no allusion to the changed state of affairs. He did not kiss her as he had done on the previous night, nor treat her otherwise than with his usual old-fashioned ceremonious politeness. John's voice once or twice in the course of the meal calling her Kate, John's eyes now and then brightening up upon her out of the haze of anxiety that overclouded them, were the only indications that anything out of the ordinary had happened. Kate said to herself, with a sort of whimsical disappointment, that this was a very strange way of being engaged. That era in her life had appeared to her before it came as if it must change everything. And it seemed to have changed nothing, not even among the people it most concerned. Sometimes she felt as if she must laugh, sometimes as if she must cry, sometimes disposed to be angry, sometimes wounded. She was glad to escape from the table to the garden, where John found her—glad, poor fellow, to escape too. And then, as they wandered among the rose-bushes arm-in-arm, she found out how it was.

"But they have no right to be so hard on you," cried Kate, impetuously. "Suppose you had never seen me or thought of me—would it be right to be a clergyman, just like a trade, when you felt you could not in your heart——"

"My Kate!—you understand me at least; that is what I said."

"And when you can do so much

better for yourself," said Kate, with emphasis. "Mrs Mitford and the Doctor should think of that. One way you never could have been anything but a clergyman; while the other way—why, you may be anything, John."

He shook his head over her, half sadly, half pleased. He knew his capacities were far from being beyond limit, but still that she should think so was pleasant. And then there was the sense, which was sweet, that he and she, spending the summer morning among the flowers, were a little faction in arms against the world, with a mutual grievance, mutual difficulties, a cause to maintain against everybody. Solitude *à deux* is sweet, and selfishness *à deux* has a way of looking half sublime. It was the first time either of them had experienced this infinitely seductive sentiment. They talked over the hardness of the father and mother, with a kind of delight in thus feeling all the world to be against them. "They cannot blame me, for you were thinking of that before you ever saw me," said Kate. "Blame you! it is one thing the more I have to love you for," said John. "I should never have been awakened to free myself but for you, my darling. I should have gone stupidly on under the sway of custom." And for the moment he believed what he said. Oh, what a difference it made! the wide world before him where to choose, and this creature, whom he loved more than all the world, leaning on him, putting her fate in his hands; instead of the dull routine of parish duties, and the dull home life, and the stagnation around, and all his uneasy restless thoughts.

It was about twelve o'clock when Kate went up-stairs to get her hat, with the intention of setting out on foot to waylay her father. It was absolutely indispensable, she felt, that she should be the first to see him; but up to that time the two lovers had wandered about together

unmolested, not caring who saw them, arm-in-arm. This was the first advantage of the engagement. Dr Mitford saw them from his library, and Mrs Mitford looked down upon them with a beating heart from her chamber-window, but neither interfered. Twenty-four hours before Mrs Mitford would have gone out herself to take care of them, or would have called Kate to her; but now that they were engaged, such precautions were vain. And other people saw them besides the father and mother. Fred Huntley, for instance, who reined in his horse, and peered over the garden-wall as he passed, with a curiosity he found it difficult to account for, saw them standing by the lilies leaning on each other, and said "Oh!" to himself, and turned back and rode home again, without giving the message he had been charged with. He had come to ask the Fanshawe Regis people to a garden-party—"But what is the use?" Fred had said to himself; and had turned, not his own head, but his horse's, and gone back again. Parsons, too, saw the pair from Kate's window, where she was finishing her packing. "Master will soon put a stop to that," was Parsons' decision. But everybody perceived at once that a new relationship had been established between the two, and that everything was changed.

When Kate ran up-stairs to put on her hat, it was after two hours of this consultation and mutual confidence. It was true she had not taken much advice from him. She had closed his lips on that subject, telling him frankly that she knew her papa a great deal better than he did, and that she should take her own way; but she had given a great deal of counsel, on the other hand. He had found it impossible to do more than make a succession of little fond replies, so full had she been of advice and wisdom. "You must be, oh, so kind and gentle and nice to her," Kate had said. "I

will never forgive you if you are in the least cross or disagreeable to mamma. Yes ; I like to say mamma. I never had any mother of my own, and she has been so good to me, and I love her so—not for your sake, sir, but for her own. You must never be vexed by anything she says ; you must be as patient and gentle and sweet to her—but, remember, you must be firm ! It will be kindest to all of us, John. If you were to appear to give in now, it would all have to be done over again ; now the subject has been started, it will be much kinder to be firm.”

“ You need not fear in that respect,” John replied. “ I think nothing but the thought of you up-stairs, and the feeling that you understood me, would have given me courage to speak ; but the moment one word had been said, all had been said. Nothing can bring things back to their old condition again.”

“ I am so glad,” said Kate ; “ but, remember, you must be gentleness itself to *her*. If you were rude or undutiful or unkind, I should never more look at you again.”

“ My darling !” said John. It was so sweet of her thus to defend his mother. If Mrs Mitford had heard it, her soft heart would have been filled full of disgust and bitterness to think of this stranger taking it upon herself to plead for her, his mother, with her own son ! But John only thought how sweet it was of his darling to be so anxious for his mother, and felt his heart melt over her. What was all his mother had done for him in comparison with Kate’s dominion, which was boundless, and of divine right ? Thus they discussed their position, the very difficulties of which were delicious because they were mutual, and felt that the other persons connected with them, parents and suchlike, were railed off at an immense distance, and were henceforward to be struggled against and kept in subjection. It

was with this resolution full in her mind, and thrilling with a new impulse of independence and activity, that Kate went up-stairs. Parsons had gone down to seek that sustenance of failing nature which the domestic mind finds necessary between its eight o’clock breakfast and its two o’clock dinner ; but Lizzie, whom Kate had seen but little of lately, inspired on her side by a resolution scarcely less strong than the young lady’s, was at her bedroom door, waylaying her. Lizzie rushed in officiously to find the hat and the gloves and the parasol which Miss Crediton wanted, and then she added, humbly, “ Please, miss !” and stood gaping, with her wholesome country roses growing crimson, and the creamy white of her round neck reddening all over, like sunrise upon snow.

“ Well, Lizzie, what is it ?—but make haste, for I am in a hurry,” said Kate. She was a young lady who was very good-natured to servants, and, as they said, not a bit proud.

“ Oh, please, miss !—it’s as I can’t a-bear to see you going away.”

“ Is that all ? I am sure it is very kind of you, Lizzie—everybody has been so very kind to me at Fanshawe Regis that I can’t bear to go away,” said Kate ; “ but I daresay I shall come back again—probably very often—so you see it is not worth while to cry.”

“ That’s not the reason, miss,” said Lizzie ; “ I’ve been thinking this long and long if I could better myself. Mother’s but poor, miss, and all them big lads to think of. And you as has so many servants, and could do such a deal—It aint as I’m not happy with missis—but service is service, and I feel as I ought to better myself—.”

“ Oh, you ungrateful thing !” cried Kate ; “ after Mrs Mitford has been so good to you. I would not be so ungrateful for all the world. Better yourself indeed ! I can tell you, you are a great deal more likely to injure yourself. Oh,

Lizzie, I should not have thought it of you! You ought to be so happy here."

"It aint as I'm not happy," cried Lizzie, melting into tears. "Oh, miss, don't you go and be vexed. It's all along of what Miss Parsons says. She says in the kitchen as how she's going to be married, and all the dresses you gives her, and all the presents, and takes her about wherever you go. Oh, miss, when Miss Parsons is married, won't you try me? I'll serve you night and day—I will. I don't mind sitting up nights—not till daylight—and I'd never ask for holidays, nor followers, nor nothing. You'd have a faithful servant, though I says it as shouldn't," said Lizzie, with her apron at her eyes; "and mother's prayers, and a blessin' from the Lord—oh, miss, if you'd try me!"

"Try you in place of Parsons!" cried Kate, in consternation. "Why, Lizzie, are you mad? Can you make dresses, you foolish girl, and dress hair, and do all sorts of things, like Parsons? You are only Mrs Mitford's housemaid. Do you mean to tell me you can do all that too?"

"I could try, miss," said Lizzie, somewhat frightened, drying her eyes.

"Try!—to make me a dress!" cried Kate, her eyes dancing with fun and comic horror. "But, Lizzie, I will try and find a place for you as housemaid, if you like."

"I don't care for that, miss," said Lizzie, disconsolately; "what I want is to better myself. And I know I could, if I were to try. When I've tried hard at anything, I've allays done it. And, please, I don't know what Miss Parsons is, as she should be thought that much of—I could do it if I was to try."

"Then you had better try, I think," said Kate, with severe politeness, "and let me know when you have succeeded; but in the mean time I will take my gloves, which you are spoiling. I have no more time to talk just now."

Poor Lizzie found herself left behind, when she had hoped the argument was just beginning. Kate ran down with her gloves in her hand, half annoyed, half amused. The girl was so ready to transplant herself anywhere—to reach out her rash hands to new tools, and to take upon her a succession of unknown duties, that Kate was quite subdued by the thought. "How foolish!" she said to herself. "When she has been brought up to one thing, why should she want to try another? It is so silly. What stupid servants are! If I had been brought up a housemaid, I should have remained a housemaid. And to be willing to leave her good mistress and her home and all her past life—for what?" said Kate, moralising. Had she but known what a very similar strain of reasoning was going on in Mrs Mitford's mind! "Give up his home, and all his associations, and his prospects in life, and the work God had provided for him—for what?" John's mother was musing. The school, and the old women in the village, and all her parish work, had slid out of her thoughts. She had shut herself up in her own room, and was brooding over it—working the sword in her wound, and now and then crying out with the pain. And Dr Mitford in his study paused from time to time in the midst of his paper, and wished with a glum countenance that Mr Crediton's visit was well over, and made up little speeches disowning all complicity in the business; and John had gone down to the river, to the foot of those cliffs close to the river where Kate's horse was carrying her when he saved her, and, with his fishing-rod idle in his hand, tried also to prepare himself for that awful interview with Kate's father, and for the final argument with his own which must follow. He was in the first day of his lover's paradise, and had just tasted the sweetness of mutual consultation over those interests and prospects which were

now hers as well as his. And he was very happy. But all the same he was wretched, feeling himself torn asunder from his life—feeling that he had lost all independent standing, and had alienated the hearts which loved him most in the world. All this followed upon the privilege of saving Miss Crediton's life, and her month's residence at Fanshawe Regis. Was it Kate's fault? Nobody said so in words, not even Mrs Mitford; and Kate went to meet her father with such a sense of splendid virtue and disinterestedness as never before had swelled her bosom. She was full of the energy and exhilaration which attends the doing of a good action. "I have saved him," she said to herself, "as he saved me. I have prevented him going and making a sacrifice of himself. He would never have had the courage to stand up for himself without me." Moved by this glow of delightful complacency, she set out upon the road to the station; and it was not till she heard the jingle of the phaeton in the distance that a thrill of nervousness ran over Kate, and she felt the magnitude and importance of what she was about to do.

Mr Crediton probably was thinking of quite other things—at least, he did not recognise her, though she stood against the green hedge-row in her light summer dress, making signs with her parasol. It was only when the groom drew up that he observed the pretty figure by the roadside. "What, Kate!" he cried, with a flush of pleasure, and jumped out of the phaeton to greet her. "But there is no room for another," he said, looking comically at the respectable vehicle, when he had kissed his child, and congratulated her on her improved looks—"what is to be done?"

"I wanted to have driven the pony to the station," said Kate, "but Dr Mitford would not let me. Now you must walk home with me, papa—it is not a mile. James,

you may drive on and say we are coming. Dr Mitford thought the pony would be too much for me," she added, demurely. "He is so funny, and so precise about everything." Then Kate remembered suddenly that it was very contrary to her interest to depreciate any of the Mitford family, and changed her tone—"but so nice—you cannot think, papa, how kind, how good they have all been to me: they have made me like their own child."

"So much the better, my dear," said Mr Crediton. "I am very grateful to them. I am sure they are very good sort of people. But I hope, Kate, you are not sorry to be going home?"

"I am not sorry to see *you*, papa," cried Kate, clasping his arm with both her hands. And then she leaned her head towards him in her caressing way. "Dear papa! I have so much to tell you," she went on, faltering in spite of herself.

"If you have much to tell me, you must have used your time well," said Mr Crediton, smiling upon her the smile of fond paternal indulgence. "And I daresay the items are not very important. But you have got back your roses and your bright eyes, my pet, and that is of more consequence than all the news in the world."

"Papa," said Kate, moved to a certain solemnity, "you would not say so if you knew what I am going to say. Do you remember what you said to me the morning you left? and I thought it was such nonsense;—but," here she gave his arm a tender little squeeze between her two clinging hands, "I suppose it was you that knew best."

"What did I say to you the morning I left?" said Mr Crediton, quite unsuspecting. He was pleased she should remember, pleased she should think he knew best. But he could scarcely realise his saucy Kate in this soft adoring creature, and he put his own hand caress-

ingly upon the two little hands. "Mrs Mitford must have done you a great deal of good," he added, with a soft laugh; "you did not use to be quite so retentive of what I said."

"Oh, but papa, if you would only remember!" said Kate. "Papa," she resumed, faltering, and drooping her head, "it came true—all your warning about—John."

Mr Crediton gave a start, as if he had been shot. "About—John. What does this mean?" he cried, becoming alarmed. "What is it? I remember most things that concern you, but I don't recollect anything particular I said."

"Yes, papa; you warned me about—John. But it has not quite come true," she added, lowering her voice, and leaning on him, with her head against his arm; "or rather, it has come more than true. Papa, don't be angry. I came out on purpose to tell you. They are in a dreadful state about it. It is making poor Mrs Mitford quite ill. She thinks you will think they had some hand in it, but indeed they had not. Papa, dear, promise me you will not be angry. I—I am—engaged—to John."

Mr Crediton was a very decorous, respectable man, not addicted to outbursts of passion, but at this wonderful announcement he swore a prodigious oath, and drew his arm away from her, giving her un-awares a thrust aside which made her reel. Kate was so bewildered, so frightened, so dismayed by this personal touch that she blushed crimson the one moment, and the next began to cry. She stood gazing at him, with the big tears dropping, and the most piteous look in her eyes. "Oh, papa, don't kill me!" she cried, in her consternation, sinking into the very hedge, in horror of his violence. Mr Crediton was so excited that he paid no attention to her cry of terror. "The d—d scoundrel!" he cried. "What! come in like this behind my back and rob me—take ad-

vantage of my sense of obligation—curse him! Curse them all! That's your pious people!" And the man raved and blasphemed for five minutes at least, as if he had been his own groom, and not a respectable gentleman with grey hairs on his head, and the cares of half the county in his hands.

All this time Kate was too frightened to speak, but she was not the kind of girl to be overwhelmed by such a fit of passion. She shrank back farther into the hedge, and grew as white as her dress, and trembled a good deal, and could not have uttered a word. But gradually her courage returned to her. Her heart began to thump less wildly against her breast, but rose and swelled instead with a force which was half self-will and half a generous sense of injustice. When Mr Crediton came to himself—which he did all at once with some very big words in his mouth, and his hand clenched in the air, and his face blazing with fury—he stopped short all at once, and cast an alarmed look at his daughter. Good heavens! he, a respectable man, to utter such exclamations, and in Kate's presence! He came to himself all in a moment, and metaphorically fell prostrate before her with confusion and shame.

"Well," he said, half fiercely, half humbly, "it is not much wonder if a man should forget himself. How you dare to stand there and face me, and put such a thing into words!"

"Papa, I am very much surprised," said Kate, her courage rising to the occasion. "I could not have believed it. It is best it should be me, and not a stranger, for what would any stranger have thought? But all the same, I am very sorry that it was me. I shall never be able to forget that I saw you look like that, and heard you say—Ah!" said Kate, shutting her eyes. He thought she was going to faint, and got very much frightened; but nothing could be further from Kate's mind than any

intention of fainting. She sat down, however, on the grass, and leaned her elbows on her knees, and hid her face in her hands. And the unhappy father, conscious of having so horribly committed himself, stood silent, and did not know what to say.

Then, after a moment, she raised her head and looked him in the face. "Papa," she said, "the people you have been abusing are waiting over there to welcome you to their house. They don't like your coming, because they have a feeling what will happen; and they are very very vexed with their son for falling in love with me; and, poor fellow! I think he is vexed with himself, though he can't help it. What are you going to do? Are you going to swear at Dr Mitford, whose son saved your only child's life, and whose wife saved it over again, because they love me now, as well? Are you going to drive me mad, and make me that I don't care what I do? I am not so good as John is," she said, with a half-sob; "if you cross me I will not be humble. I will go wrong, and make him go wrong too. You cannot change my mind by swearing at me, papa. What are you going to do?"

Yes, that was the question. It was very easy to storm and swear, with nobody present but his daughter. But Dr Mitford was as good a man as Mr Crediton, and as well known in the county, though he was not so rich. And John had saved Kate's life at the risk of his own; and she had been taken in, and nursed, and brought back to perfect health; and there was no single house in the world to which Mr Crediton lay under such a weight of obligations. Was he to turn his back upon the house, and ignore all gratitude? Was he to

go and insult them, or what was he to do? He was very angry, furious with Kate and her bold words, yet cowed by her in a way most wonderful to behold. "We had better walk back to the station; you are able enough for that, or at least you look so," he said.

"That will show how highly you esteem my life," said Kate, "which has been twice saved in that house; though even that would be better than insulting them to their face."

"By Jove!" said Mr Crediton, under his breath; and he took a few rapid turns up and down the road, with a perplexity which it would be impossible to describe. At last he came to a stop opposite Kate, who was watching him anxiously, without appearing to take any notice; and she felt that the fit was over. He came back to her very sternly, speaking with none of its usual softness in his voice.

"Kate," he said, "you have spoken in a very unpardonable, very impertinent, way to me, but perhaps I have been wrong too. Of course I am not going to transgress the laws of civility. My opinion is not changed, but I hope I can be civil to my worst enemy. Get up, and let us go to the Rectory; it is the only thing we can do."

Kate rose without a word, and put her hand upon her father's arm, and the two stalked into Fanshawe Regis like two mutes following a funeral. They neither looked at each other, nor uttered a syllable to each other, but walked on side by side, feeling as if mutual hatred, and not love, was the bond between them. But yet in her inmost heart Kate felt that nothing was lost. The communication had been made, and the worst was over—perhaps even something had been gained.

CHAPTER XIII.

It was perhaps well, on the whole, for the comfort of all the party, that

Mr Crediton had behaved so very badly on the first announcement of

this news. His self-betrayal put him on his guard. It recalled him to a sense of needful restraint, and that the Mitfords were not, after all, people to be treated with contempt. He was very serious and somewhat stiff during the luncheon, which was sufficiently trying to all the party, but he was not uncivil. Of John he took no notice at all after the first formal recognition, but to Mrs Mitford and the Doctor he was studiously polite, making them little speeches of formal gratitude. "I find my child perfectly recovered, thanks to your kind care," he said. "I can never sufficiently express my deep sense of obligation to you." This speech called up an angry flush on John's cheek, but not a word was spoken by any of the party to imply that there was any stronger bond than that of kindness between Kate and the people who had been so good to her. The two young people were made to feel that they were secondary altogether. The thoughts of their elders might, indeed, be occupied about them, but they themselves were struck out of the front of the action, and relegated to their natural place. Mr Crediton carried this so far that, when luncheon was over, he turned to Dr Mitford with a request for some conversation with him, altogether ignoring the existence of Dr Mitford's son. But John had risen, and had taken up his own rôle almost in the same breath.

"May I ask you to see me first, Mr Crediton?" he said. "There are some things of which I am most anxious to speak to you at once."

Mr Crediton rose too, and made John a little formal bow. "I am at your service," he said, "but I hope you will not want me long, for I have a great deal to say to your father," and there was a kind of suppressed mockery about his lips. Dr Mitford stood up, looking somewhat scared, and listened; no doubt feeling himself, in his turn, thrust aside.

"I must not interfere," he said, with a kind of ghastly smile, "and I take no responsibility in what my son is going to say; but if you will both come to my library——"

"I should prefer speaking to Mr Crediton alone," said John. And then it seemed that his father shrank like a polite ghost, and gave way to the real hero of the situation. Mrs Mitford shrank too, joining in her husband's involuntary gesture; and John marched boldly out, leading the way, while Mr Crediton followed, and the Doctor went after them, shrugging his shoulders with a faint assumption of indifference. It seemed as if some magician had waved a wand, and the three gentlemen disappeared out of the room, leaving Mrs Mitford and Kate looking at each other. And there they sat half stupefied, with their hearts beating, till Jervis came in to clear the table, and looked at them as a good servant looks, with suspicious watchful eyes, as if to say, What is it all about, and what do you mean by it, sitting there after your meal is over, and giving yourselves up to untimely agitations, disturbing Me? Mrs Mitford obeyed that look as a well-brought-up woman always does. She said, "Come, Kate! what can you and I be thinking of?" and led the way into the drawing-room. She did this with an assumption of liveliness and light-heartedness which was overdoing her part. "We need not take the servants into our confidence, at least," she said, sitting down by her work-table, and taking out her knitting as usual. But it was a very tremulous business, and soon the needles dropped upon her knee. Kate, too, attempted to resume the piece of worsted work she had been doing, and to look as if nothing had happened; but her attempt was even more futile. When they had sat in this way silent for some five minutes, the girl's agitation got the better of her. She threw the work aside,

and ran and threw herself at Mrs Mitford's feet. "Oh, mamma, say something to me!" she cried; "I feel as if I could not breathe. And I never had any mother of my own."

Then John's mother lost the composure for which she had been struggling. Her heart was not softened to Kate personally at that climax of all the trouble which Kate had brought upon her, but she could not resist such an appeal; and she too could scarcely breathe, and wanted companionship in her trouble. It was hard to take into her heart the girl who was the occasion of it all; but yet Kate was suffering too. Mrs Mitford fell a-crying, which was the first natural expression of her feelings, and then she laid her hand softly on Kate's head, and by degrees allowed herself to be taken possession of. They were just beginning to talk to each other, to open their hearts, and enter into all those mutual explanations which women love, when Kate's quick youthful eyes caught sight of two black figures in the distance among the trees on the other side of the blazing summer lawn. She broke off in the middle of a sentence, and gave a low cry, and clutched at Mrs Mitford's gown. "They are there!" cried Kate, with a gasp of indescribable suspense. And Mrs Mitford, when she saw them, began to cry softly again.

"Oh, what is he saying to my boy?" cried the agitated woman, wringing her hands. To see the discussion going on before their eyes gave the last touch of the intolerable to their anxiety. As for Kate, she gnashed her teeth at the thought that she could not interpose, nor bear the brunt, but must leave John to undergo all her father's reproaches and insults, and perhaps contempt. The thought made her wild. She could not cry as Mrs Mitford did, but sat erect on the floor where she had placed herself at the other's feet, her whole frame thrilling with the loud beats of her heart.

"Oh, Kate, I am a bad woman!"

cried Mrs Mitford; "I could hate you, and I could hate your father, for bringing all this trouble on my John."

"I don't wonder," cried Kate, in her passion; and then she made an effort to conquer herself. "Papa cannot eat him," she added, with a little harsh laugh of emotion. "I have had the worst of it. He will never say to John what he said to me."

"What did he say to you?"

"Oh, nothing!" she cried, recollecting herself. "He is my own papa; he has a right to say what he likes to me. It is John who is speaking now—that is a good sign. And when he chooses, and takes the trouble, John can speak so well; he is so clever. I never meant to have let him do all this, and give everybody so much trouble; but when he began to talk like *that*, what was I to do?"

"Oh, Kate!" cried the mother, with her eyes full of tears, "we are so selfish—we never thought of that! How were you to resist him more than the rest of us? My dear boy—he had always such a winning way!"

"John is speaking still," said Kate. "Mamma, I think things must be coming round. There—papa has put his hand on his arm. When he does that he is beginning to give in. Oh, if we could only hear what they say!"

"He is so earnest in all he does," said Mrs Mitford. "Kate! listen to what I am going to say to you. If this ever comes to anything—"

"Of course it will come to something," cried Kate. "I am not so good as John. If papa were to stand out, I should just wait till I was one-and-twenty; and then, if John pleased— Now they are turning back again. Oh, will they never be done? It is just like men, walking and talking, walking and talking for ever, and us poor women waiting here."

"But, Kate, listen to me," said Mrs Mitford, solemnly; "if it ever

comes to anything, you must be very very careful with my John. Look at his dear face, how it shines with feeling! He loves you so—he would put himself under your father's feet. I feel as if I could tell you the very words he is saying. And you—you have been brought up so differently. If you were tempted to be careless, and forget his ways of thinking, and prefer society and the world——”

“I see how it is,” said Kate, with a mournful cadence in her voice—she did not turn her head, for her eyes were still intently fixed on the distant figures out of doors; “I see how it is—you don't think I am the right girl for John.”

“I did not say so,” said Mrs Mitford, humbly; “how can I tell? I can't divine what is in my own boy's heart, and how can I divine yours? But I will love you for his sake. Oh, Kate! if you are good to him——”

“There! they are going in,” cried Kate. “Oh, don't you think that must mean victory? I am sure it means victory! And you don't look half glad! They are going to the library, and Dr Mitford is there. I can see very well you don't think I am the right girl for him, though I would do anything to please you. You will love me, perhaps, for his sake: mamma, I must be satisfied with that, if that is all you will give me; but once I thought you did love me a little for my own.”

“And you would rather have that?” cried the mother, feeling a sudden wave of irritation sweep over her. So long as John was suffering, she wanted him to succeed at all hazards; but, when it appeared as if he had succeeded, her thoughts took another turn. “You would like *that* best—rather a little all to yourself than a great deal for John?”

“Yes,” said Kate, stontly, and she rose from her knees and disengaged herself from Mrs Mitford's arm, which had a very languid hold of her. Poor Kate's high spirit

still made shift to assert itself, though so much had been done to break it. And now that there was no longer anything to watch, she turned her back upon the window, and upon her lover's mother, who all at once had ceased to be her friend. “You think it hard upon you,” she said, with a certain indignation, “and sometimes I think it *is* hard, having your son turned out of the way you had chosen for him, all for the sake of a poor girl you don't care for; but you might see it is hard on me as well. You look at me as if I had done him harm, and my own papa nearly casts me off for him; and even when you are kind, the best you can say is, that you will try to love me a little for John's sake. A little while ago you were all so good to me. Have I become your enemy because John loves me?” said Kate, with natural vehemence; and then she turned away, and sat down on a stool near the open window, and cried. No doubt it was partly excitement, but partly, too, it was the isolation in which she felt herself at a moment when she wanted sympathy. John's love was not all to her, perhaps, that her love was to him; and the petted, spoiled child, whom nobody all her life had been able to make enough of, was sorely wounded to feel herself thus repulsed on all hands—not welcomed into the new family of which she was to be a member, and yet punished by her own father for her inclination to enter it. Nobody seemed to stand by her—except John; and John, she would have admitted, was now the chief person to be thought of. But already his love had become to her a matter of course. At that moment, when he and her father were discussing her fate, and his mother was so coldly kind to her, she felt so lonely, so miserable, so set on edge, that the whole world grew dark. She sat down and hid her face and cried, with a sense of forlorn relief like a child's. It was in reality the kind of breakdown by which such a restless, impatient

spirit touches mother earth, and acquires new courage; but it looked like the depths of despair to the spectator who looked on with wondering eyes. Mrs Mitford, however, was fitted with armour of proof against all assaults of sympathy. She sat and looked at the sobbing girl with a kind of wondering curiosity which she herself could not understand. She had been disposed to be very proud of Kate a little while ago. She had been charmed by her beauty and brightness, and her grace, and her wealth. There was nothing which she would not have done for her young patient. Now Kate repelled instead of attracting John's mother. Was it really — was it only — because Kate was John's choice out of the world? And she had a strange reluctance to offer her those signs of affection which, when they cease to be real, and become mere matters of habit, are always so irksome. When she was fond of Kate, before the girl had proved herself such a revolutionary, and convulsed the quiet life at Fanshawe Regis, Mrs Mitford had got into a tender way of kissing her young visitor, as is the habit of women. And had she gone to her now to comfort her, she must have kissed her. And she could not do it. She shrank from treating with any appearance of love the girl who had stolen away her boy's heart, and overturned their whole system of existence. She would have done it after a while, when she had reasoned herself into it; but by the time she had made up her mind, Kate's passion had sobbed itself out, and she was beginning to dry her eyes, to regain her colour and her natural fire, and to be herself again. The moment was past, and not to be recalled. And Kate's wilful little heart, which a kiss and a soft word would have caught and secured, recoiled, and commanded itself, and did without the maternal sympathy for which it had been craving above anything in the world.

Neither of the two ladies could have told how the afternoon passed. Every sound that went through the house seemed to them significant. Sometimes a door would open or shut, and paralyse them for the moment. Sometimes a sound as of a single step would be heard in one of the passages, and then Mrs Mitford and Kate would rise up and flush crimson, and listen as if they had not been listening all the time. "Now they are coming!" one or the other would say, with a gasp, for the waiting affected their very breathing. Except on these occasions, they scarcely exchanged two words in half an hour. From time to time Kate looked at her watch, and made a remark under her breath about the hour. "It is too late for the four o'clock train," she said; and then it was too late for the mail at half-past five; and all this time not a word came out of the stillness to relieve their anxiety. The bees buzzed about the garden, and the sun shone and shone as if he never could weary of shining, and blazed across the monotonous lawn and vacant paths, which no step or shadow disturbed. Oh the burden of the silence that lay upon that whole smiling world outside, where not even a leaf would move, so eager was nature to have the first word of the secret! When Mrs Mitford's needles clicked in her tremulousness, Kate glanced up with eyes of feverish reproach; and when Kate's scissors fell, the room echoed with the sound, and Mrs Mitford felt it an injury. Thus the long, weary, languid afternoon passed on. When Jervis began to stir with his preparations for dinner, and to move about his pantry, with clink and clang of glass and silver, laying the table, the sounds were to them like the return of a jury into their box to the anxious wretches waiting for their verdict. Dinner was coming, that augustest of modern ceremonies, and the ladies felt instinctively that things must come to a crisis now. And accordingly, it was just after Jervis

had carried his echoing tray out of the pantry to the sideboard when the door of the study at last opened, and steps were heard coming along the passage—Dr Mitford's steps, creaking as they came, and another footstep, which Kate knew to be her father's. Not John! The ladies sat bolt upright, and grew red and grew pale, and felt the blood tingle to their finger-points. And then they looked at each other, and asked, silently, "Where is John?"

This time it was no longer the jurymen. It was the judge himself, coming solemn with his verdict. The gentlemen came into the room one behind the other, Mr Crediton looking worn and tired, and even Dr Mitford's white tie grown limp with suspense and emotion. But it was he who was the first to speak.

"I am sorry to have left you so long by yourselves, ladies," he said, with a little air of attempted jauntness, which sat very strangely on him, "and to have kept Mr Crediton away from you; but we had a great deal to talk over, and business, you know, must be attended to. My dear, it was business of a very momentous kind. And now, Miss Kate," said the Rector, turning upon her, and holding out both his hands—he smiled, but his smile was very limp, like his tie, and even his hands, though not expressive generally, trembled a little—"now, Miss Kate, for the first time I feel at liberty to speak to you. You must have thought me very hard and cold the other night; but now I have your father's permission to bid you welcome to my family," Dr Mitford went on, smiling a ghastly smile; and he stooped over her and kissed her forehead, and held her hands, waving them up and down as if he did not know what to do with them. "I don't know why my son has not come to be the first to tell you. Everything is settled at last."

"Where is John?" cried Mrs Mitford, with her soft cheeks blazing.

And her husband dropped Kate's hands as if they had burned him, and they all paused and looked at each other with an embarrassment and restraint which nobody could disguise.

"To do him justice, I don't think he felt himself equal to a grand tableau of family union and rapture," said Mr Crediton. "Mrs Mitford, I don't pretend to be overjoyed. I don't see why we should make any pretences about it. They have done a very foolish thing, and probably they will repent of it——"

But this was more than John's mother could bear. "One of them, I am sure, will never have any reason to repent of it," she said, with irrepressible heat, not thinking of the double meaning that her words might bear.

"I hope it may be so," Mr Crediton said, and shook his head. And there was again a silence, and Kate sat with all her veins swelling as if they would burst, and her heart beating in her very throat, and nobody taking any further notice of her. What was it to any of them in comparison with what it was to her? and yet nobody even looked at her. It seemed so utterly incredible, that for the moment she was stunned and dumb, and capable of nothing but amazement.

"No," said her father again, after a pause; "I don't pretend to be overjoyed. We have had a great deal of talk, and the talk has not been agreeable. And, Mrs Mitford, if I am to judge by your looks, I should say you were no more happy at the thought of losing your son than I am at that of losing my daughter—in so foolish a way."

"Let us hope it may turn out better than we think," said Dr Mitford; and then came the inevitable pause, which made every sentence sound so harsh and clear.

"There is certainly room for the hope," said Mr Crediton; "fortunately it must be a long time before anything comes of it. Your son seems to have quite relinquished

the thought of going into the Church."

"Have you settled that too?—is it all decided? Oh, Dr Mitford, you have been hasty with him!" cried John's mother. "I told you if you would but take time enough, and go into things with him, and explain——"

"I don't think explaining would have done much good," said Mr Crediton. "It rarely does, when a young fellow has got such an idea into his head. The only thing is, that when a boy changes once he may change twice—when he is older, and this fever-fit, perhaps, may be over——"

"Oh, can you sit and hear this?" cried Kate, springing to her feet. "Oh, papa, how can you be so wicked and so rude? Do you think John is like that—to take a fancy and give it over? And you are his mother, and know him best, and you leave him to be defended by me!"

"Kate, my dear!" cried Mrs Mitford, hastening to her, "you make me hate myself. You understand my boy—you stand up for him when his own flesh and blood is silent. And I love you with all my heart! And I will never, never grudge him to you again!"

And the two women rushed into each other's arms, and clung together in a passion of tears and mutual consolation; while the men, for their part, looked grimly on, vanquished, yet finding a certain satisfaction in their sense of superiority to any such folly. Mr Crediton sat down, with the hard unsympathetic self-possession of a man who has still a blow to deliver; and poor Dr Mitford walked up and down the room, aware of what was yet to come. But in the mean time the victims over whom the stroke was lowering had delivered themselves all at once from their special misery. The ice had broken between them. John, who had divided them, became all at once their bond of union. "Mamma,

if you will stand by me I can do anything," Kate whispered, with her lips upon Mrs Mitford's cheek. "My own child!" John's mother whispered in reply; and thus the treaty was made which was to set all other diplomacies at naught.

"I think it is a great pity," said Mr Crediton again, "but of course, in the turn that circumstances have taken, I must help him as best I can. It is not very much I can do, for you are aware when a young man changes his profession all in a minute, it is a difficult thing to provide for him. And he did not seem to have any clear idea what to do with himself. Probably you will feel it is not equal to your son's pretensions, Mrs Mitford—I have offered him a clerkship in my bank."

"A clerkship in a bank!" cried Mrs Mitford, petrified. She withdrew a little from Kate in her consternation, and sat down and gazed, trying to take in and understand this extraordinary piece of news.

"Papa, you cannot mean it," cried Kate, vehemently. "Oh, are you papa, or somebody come to mock us? A clerkship in the bank—for Dr Mitford's son—for—John!"

"John is no doubt possessed of many attractions," said Mr Crediton, in his hardest tones, "but I am only an ordinary mortal, and I cannot make him Prime Minister. When a man throws himself out of his proper occupation, he must take what he can get. And he has accepted my offer, Kate. He is not so high-flown as you are; and I can assure you a man may do worse than be a clerk in my bank."

"It is a most honourable introduction to commerce," said Dr Mitford, coming forward very limp and conciliatory; "and commerce, as I have often said, is the great power of the nineteenth century. My dear, it is not what we expected—of course it is very different from what we expected; but if I put up with it—— It cannot be such a disappointment to you as it is to me."

Mrs Mitford turned away with an impatient cry. Her very sense of decorum failed her. Though she had kept up the tradition of her husband's superiority so long that she actually believed in it, yet on this point he was not superior. She was driven even out of politeness, the last stronghold of a well-bred woman. She could not be civil to the man who had thus outraged her pride and all her hopes. She sat and moaned and rocked herself, saying, "My boy! my boy!" in a voice of despair.

"He is saying it only to try us," cried Kate. "He is not cruel. Papa, you have always been so good to me! Oh, he does not mean it. It is only—some frightful—joke or other. Papa, that is not what you mean?"

"I mean what I say," said Mr Crediton, abruptly; "and when I say so, I think I may congratulate both Mrs Mitford and myself that, whatever foolish thing our children may make up their minds to do, they cannot do it very soon. That is enough of this nonsense for the present, Kate. Dr Mitford is so kind as to ask us to stop for dinner. We must wait now for the nine o'clock train."

And just then Jervis, curious but unenlightened, rang the first bell. And what are all the passions and all the struggles of the heart compared to Dinner, invincible potentate? Mrs Mitford and Kate gathered themselves together meekly at the sound of that summons. Against it they did not dare to remonstrate. They gave each other a silent kiss as they parted at the door of Kate's room, but they could not resist nor trifle with such a stern necessity. "Where was John?" they asked themselves, as each stood before her glass, trying as best she could to clear away the trace of tears, and to hide from their own eyes and from the sharp eyes of the servants all signs of the crisis they had been going through. Kate had to retain her morning dress, as she had still

a journey before her; but she was elaborate about her hair, by way of demonstrating her self-possession. "Papa has put off till the nine o'clock train; and it is so tiresome of him, making one go down to dinner like a fright," she said to Parsons, trying to throw dust in the eyes of that astute young woman. As if Parsons did not know!

As for John, he had been wandering about stupefied ever since that amazing conclusion had been come to, in such a state of confusion that he could not realise what had happened. Kate was to be his. That was the great matter which had been decided upon. But notwithstanding his passionate love for Kate, this was not what bulked largest in his mind. The world somehow had turned a somersault with him, and he could not make out whether he had lighted on solid earth again, or was still whirling in the dizzy air. His past life had all shrivelled away from him as if it had never been. And he was a clerk in Mr Crediton's bank! To this all his dreams, all his ambitions, all his superlative youthful fancies about the only work worth doing, had come! Everything that had been said and done beside seemed to have disappeared from him, and only the dull fact was left, and the dull amaze which it brought. His sensations were those of a man who has rolled over some tremendous precipice; or who wakes out of a swoon to find himself lying on some battlefield. He was very sore and battered and beaten, tingling all over with bruises; and the relative position of the world, and everything in it, to himself was changed. It might be the same sky and the same soil to others, but to him everything was different. Kate was to be his; but that was in the future. And for the present he was to begin life, not in any noble way for the service of others, but as a clerk in Mr Crediton's bank.

DEMOCRACY BEYOND THE SEAS.

SIR CHARLES DILKE's work is both an original and a striking one. Treating of a wide subject, it is not diffuse. Passing over many lands, it leaves a clear and distinctive impression of each on the reader. As a photograph of the ideas and hopes fermenting in the minds of our race in its transatlantic homes it is very valuable. As a vivid sketch, in brief words, of the characteristic scenery of the various British inhabited or ruled countries it is excellent. Yet to us it is a book which leaves an impression of profound melancholy. To Sir C. Dilke himself, and to the majority of his readers, we believe the reverse will be the case. To them it will seem a brilliant and interesting picture of the Saxon race, full of a joyous confidence in its great and boundless destiny. Could we believe Sir C. Dilke to be a true prophet, we should almost despair of the future of the world. Sir C. Dilke is a Radical of the most advanced school. His one great hope for the future is a world of democratic equality—his one idea of its danger the dread of a gentleman. He would have every man blacken his own shoes and till his own ground, or work in his own mill with his own hands. His two great bugbears are the accumulation of wealth in great towns, which leads to masters employing workmen; and pastoral lands in the country, which necessitate large landed proprietors and a dependent troop of shepherds. Could these two birds of evil omen be only conjured away, then the landscape to him would be bright

and fair—filled with our strong, sturdy race, pushing its way everywhere, governed everywhere by universal suffrage, voting everywhere by ballot, manufacturing by co-operative associations of artisans, tilling the earth by the hands of peasant-proprietors. No upper classes to influence by their wealth or direct by their knowledge; no accumulated capital to corrupt by its temptations. One dead level of man with his fellow-men. That true end of all democracy—each man earning his bread, in the literal sense, with the sweat of his brow. To Sir C. Dilke this seems the acme of civilisation and progress. To us it seems a simple relapse into barbarism.

Equality is the dream of democracy—inequality is the law of progress. It is the hope of rising above one's fellow-men which is the great spur to exertion. It is the leisure and means acquired by the accumulation of wealth which alone makes an advance in civilisation possible. When each man acquires his daily bread by his manual toil, then all culture is impossible, and all progress suspended.*

There is one great charm about this book—it is eminently a suggestive one. It is impossible to read twenty pages of it without feeling inclined to lay it down and think over what you have read; and this is not what can be said of many works nowadays.

Its great fault is its blind and entire adoration of democracy pure and simple. It is quite curious to mark the extent to which Sir C.

'Greater Britain.' By Sir Charles Wentworth Dilke, Bart., M.P. 2 vols. London: Macmillan & Co.

* There are strong and ultra-Liberals who clearly see this. "There is no form of art or science which is not needed in the public service of such a country as this. Now wealth and station are invaluable helps towards the attainment of excellence in any of these pursuits. They give a man leisure and independence. They enable him to pursue his calling as a profession, and not as a mere trade."—'Fall Mall Gazette' of 22d October 1869.

Dilke carries this, and the entire good faith in which he relies on it. No religious devotees ever believed more devoutly in the truth of his dogma. It goes such a length as entirely to vitiate the conclusions of a naturally clear and logical mind. It is the one god of his idolatry. Everything is good which leads necessarily to pure democracy; everything is evil which checks progress towards it. This is the un-failing standard by which Sir C. Dilke judges everything. It never even crosses his mind to imagine that that can be evil which conduces to democracy, or good which obstructs progress to it. To him such an idea would be simply heresy. There is something interesting and lamb-like in this blind devotion to a political creed. Apart from this vitiating article of faith, his powers of reasoning are vigorous. We have little doubt the time will come when a more extended experience of the world will make him look back with a sad smile on the simple fervour of his early faith.

One of the most valuable and interesting parts of his work is the clear picture which he gives of the ideas and beliefs which are now fermenting and becoming consolidated in the minds of our descendants "over the water." In reference to them we are an old and comparatively stationary State. The youthful vigour of the Anglo-Saxon race, the germ of what its great future on the world's page is to be, must be sought for beyond the Atlantic. Hence the great interest and value of the thoughts which are now taking root in the minds of men there.

On one subject a clear and definite opinion has been formed by our transatlantic descendants, and that is on the question of Free-Trade. This is evidently rather puzzling to Sir C. Dilke; for just as decidedly as the democracy of our old and rich State has declared in favour of Free-Trade, has the de-

mocracy of the young and poor but rising States in the West declared in favour of Protection. The point is full of interest, and is worthy of very attentive consideration; for the mercantile and commercial welfare of our country and its transatlantic descendants is wrapped up in its decision. It is very mark-worthy that the conclusion at which the United States and Australia have arrived is very far indeed from being formed in ignorance of the principles on which Free-Trade is held to be established in this country. Quite the reverse: the doctrines of Adam Smith, Ricardo, and Mill are quite as well known and appreciated by them as by us. In the abstract they fully admit that, for the *pure and simple creation of wealth*, as apart from all other considerations, they are perfectly just. What they do hold is, that there are other things in national progress to be considered besides the accumulation of capital; and that the mere pursuit of money is of less consequence than the just and healthy development of all the great interests which, taken together in the aggregate, form a prosperous nation.

"Those," says Sir C. Dilke, "who speak of the selfishness of the Protectionists as a whole, can never have taken the trouble to examine into the arguments by which Protection is supported in Australia and America. In these countries Protection is no mere national delusion: it is a system deliberately adopted with open eyes as one conducive to the country's welfare, in spite of objections known to all, in spite of pocket losses that come home to all."
—II. 63.

"One of the greatest thinkers of America defended Protection to me on the following grounds:—That without Protection America could at present have but few and limited manufactures. That a nation cannot properly be said to exist as such unless she has manufactures of many kinds; for men are born, some with a turn to agriculture, some with a turn to mechanics; and if you force the mechanic by nature to become a farmer, he will make a bad farmer, and the nation will lose the ad-

vantage of all his power and invention. That the whole of the possible employments of the human race are in a measure necessary employments—necessary to the making up of a nation. That every concession to Free-Trade cuts out of all chance of action some of the faculties of the American national mind, and, in so doing, weakens and debases it. That each and every class of workers is of such importance to the country that we must make any sacrifice necessary to maintain them in full work.”—II. 64, 65.

“The chief thing to be borne in mind in discussing Protection with an Australian or an American is, that he never thinks of denying that under Protection he pays a higher price for his goods than he would if he bought them from us, and that he admits at once that he temporarily pays a tax of 15 or 20 per cent upon everything he buys in order to help to set his country on the road to national unity and ultimate wealth. Admitting that all you say about Protection may be true, he says that he had sooner see America supporting a hundred millions independent of the remainder of the world, than two hundred millions dependent for clothes upon the British. It is a common doctrine amongst the colonies of England that a nation cannot be called independent if it has to cry out to another for supplies of necessities: that true national existence is first attained when the country becomes capable of supplying to its own citizens those goods without which they cannot exist in the state of comfort which they have already reached. Political is apt to follow upon commercial dependency, they say.”—II. 66, 68.

There is much in these remarks deserving of careful consideration, and that equally whether we agree or whether we disagree with them. Free-Trade just now is on its trial; and, whilst rejected utterly by the United States and Australia, is vigorously assailed in France, and is even rudely challenged by the working classes in this country—its own very native seat and home.

There is another point on which opinion in the United States runs directly counter to opinion in this country, and that is on the competitive examination system.

“The clearest-sighted men of the

older colleges of America,” says Sir C. Dilke, “are trying to assimilate their teaching system to that of Michigan—at least in the one point of the absence of competition. They assert that toil performed under the excitement of a fierce struggle between man and man is unhealthy work, different in nature and in results from the loving labour of men whose hearts are really in what they do—toil, in short, not very easily distinguishable from slave labour.”—I. 86.

“The system of elective studies pursued at Michigan is one to which we are year by year tending in the English universities. As sciences multiply and deepen, it becomes more and more impossible that a ‘general course’ scheme can produce men fit to take their places in the world. Cambridge has attempted to set up both systems, and, giving her students the choice, bids them pursue one branch of study with a view to honours, or take a less valued degree requiring some slight proficiency in many things. Michigan denies that the stimulus of honour examinations should be connected with the elective system. With her, men first graduate in science, or in an arts degree, which bears a close resemblance to the English ‘poll,’ and then pursue their elected study, which leads to no university distinction, and which is free from the struggle for place and honours. The Michigan professors say that a far higher average of real knowledge is obtained under this system of independent work than is dreamt of in colleges where competition rules. ‘A higher average,’ is all they say, and they frankly acknowledge that there is here and there a student to be found to whom competition would do good. As a rule, they tell us, this is not the case. Unlimited battle between man and man for place is sufficiently the bane of the world not to be made the curse of schools. Competition breeds every evil which it is the aim of education, the duty of a university, to suppress—pale faces caused by excessive toil, feverish excitement that prevents true work, a hatred of the subject on which the toil is spent, jealousy of best friends, systematic depreciation of men’s talents, ejection of all reading that will not pay, extreme and unhealthy cultivation of the memory, general degradation of labour—all these evils, and many more, are charged upon the system.”—I. 89, 90.

Any one who has thought upon the subject, and watched the effect

of the opposite system at our universities and competitive examinations for public appointments, will readily admit that there is much truth in these remarks. At the same time, it must not be forgotten that competition gives a wonderful spur to idleness, and that allowance must be made in a republic for the democratic jealousy of all honours and distinctions.

Of one thing we are quite certain, and that is, that competitive examinations are, in the majority of cases, the worst system that could be devised for the selection of candidates for the public service. We go so far as to say that we believe a system of choosing candidates by lot, if accompanied with a good *pass* examination, would produce, on the whole, better men for the work. Competitive examination not only does not procure the sort of men you want, but positively excludes them. For the majority of the work in public offices you want a quiet, contented, unambitious, hard-working man, resigned to spend all his days labouring at an uninteresting vocation on a small salary, with no hope of rising except by a slow and regular system of promotion. And such were the class of men who formerly received such appointments. Under the competitive examination system you are provided for such a place with a young, clever, ambitious man, who has passed well, is eager to get on, is proud of his acquirements, who loathes the drudgery to which he is set, who is heart-broken at the hopeless prospect that lies before him. He necessarily becomes a discontented, querulous servant, hating his work, executing it simply as a task to be got over as soon, and with as little trouble, as possible. You stimulate a youth to the highest pitch of nervous and intellectual excitement in a contest for life and death with his fellow-men, and then set him for the remainder of his days to count bags of coffee in a custom-house, or copy

dreary pages of manuscript in an office. And then you wonder that he does not take to his work.

We once asked an old Civil servant of the Company's service what change he thought competitive examination had made in the young men who came to India. After reflecting for a moment he said,—

“The greatest difference that I see is, that those we get now cannot ride. You,” he added, “may think this a trifling matter, but in reality it goes far to the root of the thing. In India each district depends almost entirely for its prosperity upon the character of the Civil servant in charge. To do it justice he should be a man of boundless energy and of the most active habits; willing to turn his hand to anything; able to ride fifty miles a-day under a burning sun; to make a road, to build a bridge, to disperse a mob, or, if need be, to hang a man—in short, to be everywhere in his own district, to see everything done himself, to understand everything for himself, to trust nothing to others, to keep the reins always in his own hand. Under the old system we generally got well-educated men, gentlemen by birth and training, who could manage the natives well, and who had a love of field-sports which kept up the activity of Europe beneath even an Asiatic sky. Now we get highly-educated men—men who would do honour to Oxford or Cambridge—who hate exertion that is not of an intellectual kind, who shirk exposure to the sun, and desire to be left all day in peace reading their books. We obtain the qualities we do not want, and miss those which we do.”

What is really required in every department is not an examination to test merit, but one to exclude ignorance. Any mode of appointment under such a system would give a better chance of getting suitable men than we now have under the competitive one. Each department knows best what it really requires in its own *employés*. It should be left to it to lay down the *nature* and *amount* of the examination which every candidate should be required to pass before taking up his appointment; and, to secure independence, the examination should be conducted by the Civil Service

Commissioners. Under such a system we would have an ordinary chance of getting what we wanted—not, as now, an ingeniously-devised system for invariably putting the right man into the wrong place.

Sir C. Dilke's view of the Southern States, though, of course, entirely Federal, is very interesting. On landing at Norfolk pier, on the James River, he remarks :—

"These Southerners were all alike—all were upright, tall, and heavily mustached; all had long black hair and glittering eyes, and I looked instinctively for the baldric and rapier."—I. 5. "The Southern planters were gentlemen possessed of many aristocratic virtues, along with every aristocratic vice; but to each planter there were nine 'mean whites.'—I. 8. The 'mean whites,' or 'poor trash,' are the whites who are not planters—members of the slave-holding race who never held a slave—white men looked down upon by the negroes."—I. 7.

Of the negroes he remarks :—

"The negroes upon the Virginian farms are not maligned by those who represent them as delighting in the contrast of crimson and yellow, or emerald and sky-blue. I have seen them, on a Sunday afternoon, dressed in scarlet waistcoats and gold-laced cravats, returning hurriedly from 'meetin' to dance break-downs, and grin from ear to ear for hours at a time."—I. 19.

It is evident that this negro question is a puzzling one to Sir C. Dilke. He is very anxious to believe that the negro will work, but yet he cannot venture to assert that he thinks he will do so; and certainly the examples of Africa itself, Hayti, and Jamaica, are not in favour of this conclusion. He has one example, however, and he makes the most of it. Barbadoes is prospering; and he demands, if Barbadoes, why not other negro-populated States? We can answer him in a word. The negro works in Barbadoes simply because if he does not work he will starve. Barbadoes is a small island, with a dense population and no waste land. The planters hold the whole

of the estates. If a negro will not work he is turned off the estate he is on, and no other planter will receive him. Work for him is a necessity—the alternative is emigration or starvation. In similar circumstances the African will always work. But see him in the neighbouring islands, where all the circumstances are the same, *except* the vital one of the occupation of the soil. There he goes into the bush, builds a hut, clears a plot of ground, which supplies all his wants for a fortnight's work a-year, and laughs at the planters. If he wishes money for any extras he will work for a few days at high wages on their estates, but anything like regular, sustained, hard labour, such as is required for sugar-cultivation, cannot be depended on. Nor can you blame him. He has few artificial wants. These he can satisfy without continuous labour. Why then should he toil?

Sir C. Dilke has great powers of description, and the South is now the classic ground of America. It has historical associations. On visiting Petersburg, he says :—

"The spot where we first struck the rebel lines was that known as the Crater—the funnel-shaped cavity formed where Grant sprang his famous mine. 1500 men are buried in the hollow itself, and the bones of those smothered by the falling earth are working through the soil. 5000 negro troops were killed in this attack, and are buried round the hollow where they died, fighting as gallantly as they fought everywhere throughout the war. It is a singular testimony to the continuousness of the fire, that the still remaining subterranean passages show that in countermining the rebels came once within three feet of the mine, yet failed to hear the working parties."—I. 14, 15.

He visited the cemetery of Richmond :—

"From Monroe's tomb the evening view is singularly soft and calm; the quieter and calmer for the drone in which are mingled the trills of the mocking-bird, the hoarse croak of the bull-frog, the hum of myriad fire-flies, that glow like summer lightning among

the trees, the distant roar of the river, of which the rich red water can still be seen, beaten by the rocks into a rosy foam. With the moment's chillness of the sunset breeze, the golden glory of the heavens fades into grey, and there comes quickly over them the solemn blueness of the southern night. Thoughts are springing up of the many thousand unnamed graves where the rebel soldiers lie unknown, when the Federal drums in Richmond begin sharply beating the *rappel*."—L. 17, 18.

There are various expressions scattered through Sir C. Dilke's work which show that he considers the regiments of the Federals, with the "best blood of New England" in their ranks, as having been, man for man, far more than a match for those recruited from the "mean whites" of the Confederacy. This is a very singular remark to come from one who must have known that from first to last the North enormously outnumbered the South, that the Federal armies on the eastern seaboard were mainly composed of Irishmen and Germans, and that in every single action of the war where there was even an approach to equality of numbers the Confederates beat the Federals. If any one thing was decisively proved by the result, it was this, that the fighting power of the former exceeded that of the latter greatly, and that nothing but an overwhelming superiority in numbers and in wealth gave victory finally to the North. But Sir C. Dilke has no word of sympathy for the cause for which Jackson and Sydney Johnstone died, for which Beauregard and Longstreet fought, for which Lee commanded in the field, and Davis ruled in the Cabinet.

The great constitutional question at issue on the conquest of the South is fairly and concisely stated by our author:—

"The one great issue between the Radicals and the Democrats at the conclusion of the war was this: The 'Democracy' denied that the readmission to Congress of the Southern States was a matter of expediency at all; to them

they declared that it was a matter of right. Either the Union was or was not dissolved: the Radicals admitted that it was not, that all their endeavours were to prevent the Union being destroyed by rebels, and that they succeeded in so doing. The States, as States, were never in rebellion; there was only a powerful rebellion localised in certain States. 'If you admit, then,' said the Democrats, 'that the Union is not dissolved, how can you govern a number of States by major-generals?' Meanwhile the Radicals went on, not wasting their time in words, but passing through the House and over the President's veto the legislation necessary for the reconstruction of free government—with their illogical but thoroughly English good sense avoiding all talk about constitutions that are obsolete and laws that it was impossible to enforce, and pressing on steadily to the end that they have in view: equal rights for all men, free government as soon as may be."—L. 287.

What the required measures were was the abolition of State rights in the conquered States. These States must be held against the declared will of their white inhabitants. Two courses were open—military despotism or slave despotism. The North chose the latter. It was an ingenious and cheap method of persecution to the Southern planters to hand over the government of the South to its Helots, and only to retain the garrison necessary to keep the Helots themselves in check. Russia is now copying the device in Poland, and keeping it by the aid of the enfranchised serfs.

The model republic may be proud in having given a practical lesson on the suppression of freedom to the model despotism.

"It is clear that the Southern negroes must be given a decisive voice in the appointment of the Legislature by which they are to be ruled, or that the North must be prepared to back up by force of opinion, or, if need be, by force of arms, the Federal Executive, when it insists on the Civil Rights Bill being set in action in the South. Government through the negroes is the only way to avoid government through an army, which would be dangerous to the freedom of the North. It is safer for

America to trust her slaves than to trust her rebels—safer to enfranchise than to pardon.”—I. 29.

But the rebels were stupid enough not to see this. An old Southern planter said to Mr Dilke,—

“The Radicals are going to give the ballot to our niggers to strengthen their party, but they know better than to give it to their Northern niggers.”

“D. ‘But surely there’s a difference in the cases?’

“*The Planter*. ‘You’re right—there is; but not your way. The difference is, that the Northern niggers can read and write, and even lie with consistency, and ours can’t.’

“D. ‘But there’s the wider difference, that negro suffrage down here is a necessity, unless you are to rule the country that’s just beaten you.’

“*The Planter*. ‘Well, then, of course, we differ. We rebels say we fought to take our States out of the Union. The Yanks beat us, so our States must still be in the Union. If so, why shouldn’t our representatives be unconditionally admitted?’

“Nearer to a conclusion we, of course, did not come; he declaring that no man ought to vote who had not education enough to understand the Constitution—I, that this was good *prima facie* evidence against letting him vote, but that it might be rebutted by the proof of a higher necessity for his voting. As a planter said to me, ‘The Southerners prefer soldier rule to nigger rule.’”—I. 35.

And in the face of this, Sir C. Dilke wonders that the planters have mostly emigrated!

But Sir C. Dilke is very candid as to the legality of the measures of his Northern friends.

“The more honest among the Republicans admit that, for the position which they have taken up, they can find no warrant in the Constitution; that, according to the doctrine which the ‘Continental statesmen’ and the authors of ‘The Federalist’ would lay down, were they living, thirty-five of the States, even if they were unanimous, could have no right to tamper with the Constitution of the thirty-sixth. The answer to all this can only be, that, were the Constitution closely followed, the result would be the ruin of this land.”—I. 284.*

We remarked before that Sir C. Dilke’s blind devotion to democracy utterly overpowers his naturally strong logical judgment. The above clearly proves this. Even on the admission of their opponents, the South had the legal right on its side throughout. But what then? The exercise of that right would have interfered with the universal dominion of democracy on the American Continent; therefore right must go to the wall. And the Democrats having might, it did go to the wall, as it too often does in similar circumstances in this world. It is curious to see the advocates of a despotic democracy driven, in their last resort, to justify themselves by the “tyrant’s plea”—necessity. The sympathy between the United States and Russia is easy to understand.

Sir C. Dilke, of course, has unbounded admiration for the working of democracy in the States, but he evidently has some secret misgivings as to the perfect purity and

* When democracy is removed, Sir C. Dilke’s judgment is a very clear one in regard to questions such as these. Thus, when speaking of the Dutch system of government in the Eastern Islands, he says: “Those who narrate to us the effects of the Java system forget that it is not denied that in the tropical islands, with an idle population and a rich soil, compulsory labour may be the only way of developing the resources of the countries, but they fail to show the justification for our developing the resources of the country by such means” (ii. 179). Exactly so; and a parallel case exists in the United States. Those who insist on the right of the Federals to reannex the Confederate States by force of arms, forget that it is not denied that such was the only means of re-establishing one great dominant democracy on the American continent; but they fail to show the justification for establishing such a democracy by violating the Constitution under which alone the independent States of North America associated themselves for certain purposes of government in a Federal Union, and from which certain of them desired peaceably to withdraw when they conceived these purposes were no longer obtained.

freedom of choice resulting from the "caucus and convention" system (i. 291, 293); he is not happy at the prospect of Irish ascendancy in the great cities (i. 45), and he is most indignant at the wealthy merchants of New York and the other seaboard towns because they withdraw from all share in public affairs, and, living in a jealously-guarded exclusive circle, abuse mob-government.

"They tell a story of a traveller on the Hudson River Railroad who, as the train neared Albany, said to a somewhat gloomy neighbour, 'Going to the State Legislature?' getting for answer, 'No, sir; It's not come to that with me yet. Only to the State prison!' Stories such as this the rich New Yorkers are nothing loath to tell; but they take no steps to check the denationalisation they lament. Instead of entering upon a reform of their municipal institutions, they affect to despise free government; instead of giving, as the oldest New England families have done, their tone to the State schools, they keep entirely aloof from school and State alike. Sending their boys to Cambridge, Berlin, Heidelberg, anywhere rather than to the colleges of their native land, they leave it to learned, pious Boston to supply the West with teachers, and to keep up Hale and Harvard. Indignant if they are pointed at as 'no Americans,' they seem to separate themselves from everything that is American. They spend summers in England, winters in Algeria, springs in Rome, and Coloradans say, with a sneer, 'Good New Yorkers go to Paris when they die.'"—I. 45, 46.

It never seems to strike Sir C. Dilke that this is the necessary result of pure democracy. Universal suffrage means the disfranchisement of every class above the lowest and most numerous. It is not probable that a very large section of the upper classes will find their views exactly in unison with those of the dregs of great cities. Therefore in the United States they generally in such circumstances withdraw from politics altogether. With us, but too often, when standing for such constituencies, they either bribe, or even in

some instances play the hypocrite. It was a curious idea of our Radicals that you would increase the purity of election by doubling the number and the poverty of the electors, and the revelations of the election commissioners are the natural result. But what to us is even a more deplorable result is the rise of a class hitherto new in our House of Commons, of men who have got in by the profession and practice of opinions which in their hearts they despise. It but too commonly happens now that you meet a member one day, and find that on some point he has very clear and decided views; you discover his name, a few days after, on the division list, on exactly the opposite side. You say to your friend in some wonder, "How did you come to vote so?" He replies, "My dear fellow, you know I detest the measure, but I could not help myself. If I did not vote for it, I would to a certainty lose my seat at the next election."

Sir C. Dilke imagines that the result of the late war settled for all time the unity of the United States. But there are many passages even in his own book which make us doubt this.

"'We aint going to fight the North and West again,' said an ex-colonel of rebel infantry; 'next time we fight 'twill be us and the West against the Yanks.'" —I. 6. "Next after the jealousy between two Australian colonies, there is nothing equal to the hatreds between cities competing for the same trade." —I. 102. "The Americans of the valley States, who fought all the more heartily in the Federal cause from the fact that they were battling for the freedom of the Mississippi against the men who held its mouth, look forward to the time when they will have to assert peaceably, but with firmness, their right to the freedom of their railways through the Northern Atlantic States. Whatever their respect for New England, it cannot be expected that they are for ever to permit Illinois and Ohio to be neutralised in the Senate by Rhode Island and Vermont. If it goes hard with New England, it must go harder still with New York; and the Western men

look forward to the day when Washington will be removed, Congress and all, to Columbus or Port Riley."—I. 105. "Governor Gilpin it was who hit upon the glorious idea of placing Colorado half upon each side of the Sierra Madre. There never in the history of the world was a grander idea than this. Any ordinary pioneer or politician would have given Colorado the natural frontier, and have tried for the glory of the foundation of two states instead of one. The consequence would have been the lasting disunion between the Pacific and Atlantic States, and a possible future break up of the country. As it is, this commonwealth, little as it at present is, links sea to sea, and Liverpool to Hong-Kong."—I. 118.

We much fear that, in spite of the "glorious idea" of Governor Gilpin, the future break up of the country is certain to take place. The revolt of the South was but the first of many similar struggles which the growth of new and divergent interests will cause, as the vast breadth of the continent becomes peopled. There is no diversity of race to complicate the question, so that natural interests in time are likely to work out their natural results in the dissolution of the great American Confederacy of States, and its reconstitution in three large groups. Nature herself seems to have pointed out the limits of the three kingdoms into which she will ultimately cast the now United States. One will embrace the Atlantic seaboard from the summit of the Alleghanies to the sea; the second will include the whole valley of the Mississippi, from the Alleghanies to the Grand Plateau and the Rocky Mountains; the third will lie between the watershed of the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific coast. Each of these great divisions of territory has different natural outlets and different material interests. It is merely a matter of time when these will lead to the dissolution of the slender tie of a common Federal government.

We have delayed so long on the large political and social questions

called up by the contemplation of the United States, that we have room but for one extract to paint its great Western features.

"The landscape of the Great Plain is full of life, full of charm—lonely indeed, but never wearisome. Now great rolling uplands of enormous sweep, now boundless grassy plains. There is all the grandeur of monotony, and yet continual change. Sometimes the distances are broken by the buttes or rugged bluffs. Over all there is a sparkling atmosphere and never-failing breeze; the air is bracing even when most hot; the sky is cloudless, and no rain falls. A solitude which no words can paint, and the boundless prairie swell, convey an idea of vastness, which is the overpowering feature of the plains. Vast and silent, fertile yet waste, field-like yet untilled, they have room for the Huns, the Goths, the Vandals—for all the teeming multitudes that have poured and can pour from the plains of Asia and of Central Europe. Twice as large as Hindostan, more temperate, more habitable, nature has placed them there hedgeless, gateless, free to all—a green field for the support of half the human race, unclaimed, untouched—awaiting, smiling, hands and plough."—I. 131-133.

On the political future of the Pacific States Sir C. Dilke thus expresses himself:—

"The material interests of the Pacific States will always lie in union. The West, sympathising in the main with the Southerners upon the slavery question, threw herself into the war, and crushed them, because she saw the necessity of keeping her outlets under her own control. The same policy would hold good for the Pacific States in the case of the continental railroad. Uncalculating rebellion of the Pacific States upon some sudden heat is the only danger to be apprehended. . . . The single danger that looms in the more distant future is the eventual control of Congress by the Irish while the English retain their hold on the Pacific shores."—I. 274, 275.

Our author is evidently not happy in New Zealand. Despite of its unmatched scenery, it has not enough of the true ring of pure democracy for him. To the digger of the west coast he has some

leaning, but with the gentleman farmer of the east he has no sympathy. Its scenery he sketches with his usual power. On approaching the western coast of the south island he says—

"A hundred miles of the southern Alps stood out upon a pale-blue sky in curves of a gloomy white that were just beginning to blush with pink, but ended to the southward in a cone of fire that blazed up from the ocean. It was the snow-dome of Mount Cook struck by the rising sun. The evergreen bush, flaming with the crimson of the rata-blossoms, hung upon the mountain-side, and covered the plain with a dense jungle. It was one of those sights that haunt men for years, like the eyes of Mary in Bellini's Milan picture."—*I.* 330, 331.

"The peculiarity which makes the New Zealand west-coast scenery the most beautiful in the world to those who like more green than California has to show, is, that here alone can you find semi-tropical vegetation growing close up to the eternal snows. The latitude and the great moisture of the climate bring the long glaciers very low into the valleys; and the absence of all true winter, coupled with the rainfall, causes the growth of palm-like ferns upon the ice-rivers' very edge."—*I.* 340, 341.

The difficulties of its political situation he has well depicted. New Zealand was originally settled by different colonies, planted at different times and at different points on its coast, which were physically cut off from each other by impenetrable bush and roadless tracts. This led to the rise of provinces, who could be united together only by the loose tie of a federal government. Moreover, it is separated into two islands, the northern of which is inhabited by a warlike and powerful native race, while the southern is free from this infliction. Thus the southern people have neither native wars to carry on nor native tribes from whom every acre of land must be bought. Hence they decline to be taxed for either Maori wars or the purchase of Maori lands. Thus government is

at once expensive and weak, taxation heavy, and discontent universal.

"To obtain an adequate idea of the difficulty of his task, a new governor, on landing in New Zealand, could not do better than cross the southern island. On the west side of the mountains he would find a restless digger-democracy, likely to be succeeded in the future by small manufacturers, and spade-farmers growing root-crops upon small holdings of fertile loam. On the east, gentlemen sheep-farmers, holding their twenty thousand acres each, supporters by their position of the existing state of things, or of an aristocratic republic, in which men of their own caste would rule."—*I.* 345, 346.

He makes the following just and striking remarks upon the Maori race in its contact with civilisation :—

"There is an Eastern civilisation—that of China and Hindostan—distinct from that of Europe, and ancient beyond all count: in this the Maories have no share. No true Hindoo, no Arab, no Chinaman, has suffered change in one tittle of his dress or manners from contact with the Western races; of this essential conservatism there is in the New Zealand savage not a trace."

"Nature's work in New Zealand is not the same as that which she is quickly doing in North America, in Tasmania, in Queensland. It is not merely that a hunting and fighting people is being replaced by an agricultural and pastoral people, and must farm or die—the Maori does farm; Maori chiefs own villages, build houses, which they let to European settlers; we have here Maori sheep-farmers, Maori shipowners, Maori mechanics, Maori soldiers, Maori rough-riders, Maori sailors, and even Maori-traders. There is nothing which the average Englishman can do which the average Maori cannot be taught to do as cheaply and as well. Nevertheless the race dies out. The Red Indian dies because he cannot farm; the Maori farms and dies."—*I.* 387, 393.

Sir C. Dilke's spirit rises when he reaches Australia. There he is once more in a congenial atmosphere of pure democracy, of universal suffrage, of vote by ballot. There the future of the human race is bright to him; but, alas!

there is no perfect happiness here on earth. There is a serpent even in this social paradise with its apple ready to tempt the democratic Eve. The hateful squatter aristocracy of Queensland, with their flocks and their shepherds, are ever endangering the true primitive love of equality dear to the heart of the Victorian digger.

"As the rivalry of the neighbour colonies lessens in the lapse of time, the jealousy that exists between them will doubtless die away; but it seems as though it will be replaced by a political divergence, and consequent aversion, which will form a fruitful source of danger to the Australian Confederation. In Queensland the great tenants of Crown lands—'squatters,' as they are called—sheep-farmers holding vast tracts of inland country, are in possession of the government, and administer the laws to their own advantage. In New South Wales the power is divided between the pastoral tenants on the one hand, and the democracy of the towns upon the other. In Victoria the democrats have beaten down the squatters, and, in the interest of the people, put an end to their reign. The struggle between the great Crown tenants and the agricultural democracy in Victoria, already almost over, in New South Wales can be decided only in one way; but in Queensland the character of the country is not entirely the same: the coast and river tracts are tropical bush lands, in which sheep-farming is impossible, and in which sugar, cotton, and spices alone can be made to pay. The Queenslanders have not yet solved the problem of the settlement of a tropical country by Englishmen, and of its cultivation by English hands. If, however, the other colonies permit their northern sister to continue in her course of importing dark-skinned labourers, to form a poor population, a few years will see her a wealthy cotton and sugar growing country, with all the vices of a slave-holding government, though without the name of slavery. The planters of the coast and villages, united with the squatters of the tablelands or downs, will govern Queensland, and render union with the free colonies impossible, unless great gold discoveries take place, and give the country to Australia."—II. 13-16.

There is another danger to the

virtue of Australia—her people are a pleasure-loving race.

"In France there is a tendency to migrate to Paris, in Austria a continuous drain towards Vienna, in England towards London. A corresponding tendency is observable throughout Australia and America. In the case of Australia this concentration of population is becoming more remarkable day by day. Even under the system of free selection by which the Legislature has attempted to encourage agricultural settlement, the moment a free selector can make a little money he comes to one of the capitals to spend it. Sydney is the city of pleasure to which the wealthy Queensland squatters resort to spend their money, returning to the north only when they cannot afford another day of dissipation; while Melbourne receives the outpour of Tasmania. The rushing to great cities the moment there is money to be spent, characteristic of the settlers in all these colonies, is much to be regretted, and presents a sad contrast to the quiet stay-at-home habits of American farmers."—II. 19, 20.

Sir Charles thus sketches the great enemy of democracy in Australia:—

"The squatter is the nabob of Melbourne and Sydney, the inexhaustible mine of wealth. He patronises balls, promenade concerts, flower-shows; he is the mainstay of the great clubs, the joy of the shopkeepers, the good angel of the hotels: without him the opera could not be kept up, and the jockey club would die a natural death."—II. 41.

The chief engine of the Radicals in Victoria and New South Wales wherewith to beat down this terrible aristocracy of wealth—this nightmare of the virtuous democrat—is the "free selection" law. By it the agricultural settler is authorised to buy at a fixed price the freehold of a plot of land, provided it be over 40 and less than 320 acres, "anywhere that he pleases—even in the middle of a squatter's run—if he enters at once and commences to cultivate; and the Land Act of 1862 provides that the squatting licence system shall entirely end with the year 1869." Very effectual measures

these, and pretty sure to produce the intended effect. Despotic democracy goes very plainly and effectually to work in its own cause.

As we are now fast following in the footsteps of Australian democracy, and as the working classes in this country will soon come to learn the reality of the power they have acquired, it is interesting to mark the use to which they put their power in Australia, to see how completely they have left behind the barbarism of trades-unions and assassination, and how ably they attain exactly the same results by the power of legislation and the force of law.

"In America the working men themselves, almost without exception immigrants, though powerful in the various States from holding the balance of parties, have never as yet been able to make their voice heard in the Federal Congress. In the chief Australian colonies, on the other hand, the artisans have, more than any other class, the possession of political power. Throughout the world the grievance of the working classes lies in the fact that, while trade and profit have increased enormously within the last few years, true as distinguished from nominal wages have not risen. In the American States, where the suppression of immigration seems almost impossible, their interference takes the shape of eight-hour bills, and the exclusion of coloured labourers. In Victoria and New South Wales, however, it is not difficult, quietly, to put a check upon the importation of foreign labour. The vast distance from Europe makes the unaided immigration of artisans extremely rare, and since the democrats have been in power, the funds for assisted immigration have been withheld, and the Chinese influx all but forbidden, while manifestoes against the ordinary European immigration have repeatedly been published at Sydney by the council of the associated trades. Sydney mechanics, many of them free immigrants themselves, say that there is no difference of principle between the introduction of free or assisted immigrants, and that of convicts."—II. 71, 72.

This passage throws a flood of light on the real cause of the deadly hostility of the Australians to transportation, and very clearly explains

how, in the face of a democratic class despotism, "there is no sign that in Australia, any more than in America, there will spring up a centre of opposition to the dominant majority."—II. 57.

There is a danger to democratic equality here in the very bosom of republicanism, which we would strongly recommend to the consideration of Mr Mill, and the advocates of the rights of women.

"There is at present in Victoria and New South Wales a general admission among the men of the existence of equality of conditions, together with a perpetual rebellion on the part of their wives to defeat democracy, and to reintroduce the old 'colonial court' society, and resulting class divisions. The consequence of this distinction is, that the women are mostly engaged in elbowing their way. . . . Like the American 'Democrat,' the Australian will admit that there may be any number of grades below him, so long as you allow that he is at the top; but no Republican can be stancher in the matter of his own equality with the best."—II. 57.

We remarked in the beginning of this article that Sir C. Dilke had before him a golden millennium of democracy, in which every one was to be his own servant, and earn his own bread by the sweat of his own brow. This fixes here:—

"Day by day the labour question, in its older aspects, becomes of less and less importance. The relationship of master and servant is rapidly dying the death: co-operative farming and industrial partnerships must supersede it everywhere at no distant date. The existing system of labour is anti-democratic: it is at once productive of, and founded on the existence of, an aristocracy of capital and a servitude of workmen; and our English democracies cannot afford that half their citizens should be dependent labourers. If manufactures are to be consistent with democracy, they must be carried on in shops in which each man shall be at once capitalist and handicraftsman. It is not enough that the workman should share in the profits. The change which, continuing through the middle ages into the present century, has at last everywhere converted the relation of lord and slave into that of master and hireling, is already giving place to the silent re-

solution which is steadily substituting for this relationship of capital and labour that of a perfect marriage, in which the labourer and the capitalist shall be one." —II. 81, 82.

In this scoffing sceptical age it is pleasant to meet with one who has so strong and earnest a belief, so pure and undoubted a faith, in anything, even though it be in the unselfishness and virtue of the democracy of the future!

Sir C. Dilke has a great dread, and that is the Irish immigrant. We can hardly make out whether he fears most the Celtic migration of men into the cities on the seaboard of the United States, or of women into the immaculate Australian colonies. But his remarks on the characteristics of the different races of immigrants are worthy of attention.

"To avoid the evil, by as far as possible refusing to meet it face to face, South Australia has put restrictions on her Irish immigration; for there, as in America, it is found that the Scotch and Germans are the best of immigrants. The Scotch are not more successful in Adelaide than everywhere in the known world. Half the most prominent among the statesmen of the Canadian Confederation, of Victoria, and of Queensland, are born Scots, and all the great merchants of India are of the same nation. Whether it be that the Scotch immigrants are for the most part men of better education than those of other nations, of whose citizens only the poorest and most ignorant are known to emigrate, or whether the Scotchman owes his uniform success in every climate to his perseverance or his shrewdness, the fact remains, that wherever abroad you come across a Scotchman, you invariably find him prosperous and respected. The Scotch emigrant is a man who leaves Scotland because he wishes to rise faster and higher than he can at home, whereas the emigrant Irishman quits Galway or county Cork only because there is no longer food or shelter for him there. The Scotchman crosses the seas in calculating contentment, the Irishman in sorrow and despair." —II. 120, 121.

One of the most interesting and brilliant parts of Sir C. Dilke's work is his sketch of British India.

His descriptions of it are singularly vivid. Take as an example his view of Agra:—

"The fort and palace of Akbar are the Moslem creed in stone. Without—turned towards the unbeliever and the foe—the far-famed triple walls, frowning one above the other with the frown that a hill fanatic wears before he strikes the infidel; within is the serene paradise of the believing 'Emperor of the World'—delicious fountains pouring into basins of the whitest marble, beds of rose and myrtle, balconies, and pavilions: part of the zenana, or women's wing, overhanging the river, and commanding the distant snow-dome of the Taj. Within, too, the 'Motee Musjid'—Pearl of Mosques, in fact as well as name—a marble cloistered court, to which an angel architect could not add a stone nor snatch one from it without spoiling all. These for believers: for non-believers the grim old Saracenic 'Hall of the Seat of Judgment.' The palace, except the mosque, which is purity itself, is overlaid with a crust of gems. There is one famed chamber—a women's bath-house—the roof and sides of which are covered with tiny silver-mounted mirrors, placed at such angles as to reflect to infinity the figures of those who stand within the bath; and a court is near at hand, paved with marble squares in black and white, over which Akbar and his vizier used to sit, and gravely play at draughts with dancing-girls for pieces." —II. 228, 229.

Who is there that has travelled through the North-West Provinces who will not endorse this description?

"Throughout the plains of India the highroads pass villages, serais, police-stations, and groups of trees at almost equal intervals. The space between clump and clump is generally about three miles, and in this distance you never see a house, so compact are the Indian villages. The North-West Provinces are the most densely peopled countries of the world, yet between village and village you often see no trace of man, while jackals and wild blue-cows roam about as freely as though the country were an untrodden wilderness. Each time you reach a clump of banyans, tamarind, and tulip trees, you find the same tenants of its shades: village police-station, Government posting-stable, and serai are always enclosed

within its limits. All the villages are fortified with lofty walls of mud or brick, as are the numerous police-stations along the road, where the military constabulary, in their dark-blue tunics, yellow trousers, and huge puggrees of bright red, rise up from sleep or hookah as you pass, and, turning out with tulwars and rifles, perform the military salute due in India to the white face from all native troops."—II. 237, 238.

We have rarely read a more graphic touch than the following sketch of the Indus :—

"Climate affects colour, and every country has tints of its own. California is golden, New Zealand a black-green, Australia yellow, the Indus valley is of a blazing red. Although every evening the Beloechee mountains came in sight as the sun sank down behind them and revealed their shapes in shadow, all through the day the landscape was one of endless flats. The river is a dirty flood—now swift, now sluggish, running through a country in which sand-deserts alternate only with fields of stone. Villages upon the banks there are none, and from town to town is a day's journey at the least. The only life in the view is given by an occasional sail of gigantic size and curious shape belonging to some native craft or other, on her voyage from the Punjaub to Kurrahee."—II. 328, 329.

Our author sees clearly and has expressed strongly the causes which, despite our just government and the immense consequent increase of material prosperity, render our rule unpopular amongst the natives.

"No parallel can be drawn in Europe or North America to that state of things which exists wherever we carry our arms in the East. The best example that could be given of that which occurs continually in the East, would be one which should suppose that the emperor and nobility in Russia were suddenly destroyed, and the country left in the hands of the British ambassador and the late serfs. Even this example would fail to convey a notion of the extent of the revolution which takes place on the conquest by Britain of an Eastern country; for in the East the nobles are better taught, and the people more ignorant, than they are in Russia, and the change causes a more complete destruction of poetry, of literature, and of art."—II.

367, 368. "We are levelling all ranks in India; we are raising the humblest men, if they will pass certain examinations, to posts which we refuse to the most exalted nobles, unless they can pass higher. Not only does the democratic character of our rule set the old families against us, but it leads also to the failure of our attempt to call around us a middle class—an educated thinking body of natives, with something to lose, who, seeing that we are ruling India for her own good, would support us heart and soul, and form the best bucklers of our dominion. As it is, the attempt has long been made in name; but, as a matter of fact, we have humbled the upper class, and failed to raise a middle class to take its place. We have crushed the prince without setting up the trader in his stead."—II. 380, 381. "The old school of Hindoos fear that we aim at subverting all their dearest and most venerable institutions; and the freethinkers of Calcutta and the educated natives hate us, because, while we preach culture and progress, we give them no chance of any but a subordinate career."—II. 377. "The men who cry out against our rule are the nobles and the schemers, who, under it, are left without a hope. Our levelling rule does not even, like other democracies, raise up a military chieftainship. Our native officers of the highest rank are paid and treated much as are European sergeants, though in native states they would, of course, be generals and princes."—II. 318, 319. "The native merchants and townsfolk generally are our friends. It is unfortunately the fact, however, that the cultivators of the soil, who form three-fourths of the population of India, believe themselves worse off under us than in the native states."—II. 319, 320.

There is much in the above to make the most thoughtless pause and reflect. On the difficulties we encounter in carrying out our views in India, Sir C. Dilke says :—

"The comparatively fair treatment we extend to the low-caste and no-caste men is itself an insult to the high-caste nobility; and while the no-caste men care little how we treat them provided we pay them well, and the bunnya or shopkeeping class, encouraged by the improvement, cry out loudly that the Government wrongs them in not treating them as Europeans, the high-caste men are equally disgusted with our good treatment both of middle-class

and inferior Hindoos. The Indian is essentially the caste man, the Saxon as characteristically the no-caste man, and it is difficult to produce a mutual understanding. Just as in England the people are too democratic for the Government, in India the Government is too democratic for the people."—II. 216, 217. "There can be no doubt that the revolution in the land-laws" (in Oude) "set on foot by us resulted in the offer of a career as native policemen or railway ticket-clerks to men whose ancestors were warriors and knights when ours wore woad."—II. 227. "It is a question whether we are not responsible for the tone which has been taken by civilisation in Calcutta. The old philosophy has gone, and left nothing in its place: we have by moral force destroyed the old religion, but we have set up no new."—II. 180. "We have suppressed infanticide" (of girls), "which means that children are smothered or starved instead of being exposed. The deaths of three or four hundred children are credited to the wolves in the Umritsur district of the Punjab alone; but it is remarked that the 'wolves' pick out the female infants."—II. 219, 220. "Although despotic, our government in India is not bad: indeed, the hardest thing that can be said of it is that it is too good. We do our duty by the natives manfully, but they care little about that; and we are continually hurting their prejudices, and offending them in small things, to which they attach more importance than they do to great. We worry them with municipal institutions and benevolent intentions that they cannot and will not understand."—II. 375.

As to the support we should be likely to receive from our native subjects in India in case of invasion, Sir C. Dilke's views are not very encouraging; but we must say that all we have ourselves seen entirely confirms them.

"No native believes that we shall

permanently remain in India. No native really sympathised with us during the rebellion. The natives of India watch with great interest the advance of Russia, not that they believe that they would be better off under her than under us, but that they would like, at all events, to see some one thrash us, even if in the end they lost by it. They can understand the strength which a steady purpose gives; they cannot grasp the principles which lie at the root of our half-mercantile half-benevolent despotism."—II. 308, 309. "It is impossible to believe that the native States would ever be of assistance to us, except in cases where we could do without their help. In the event of an invasion of Hindostan, a large portion of our European force would be needed to overawe the native princes, and prevent their marching upon our rear."—II. 320. "The present attitude of the mass of the people is one of indifference and of neutrality."—II. 326.*

In these long and numerous extracts we think we have amply justified the eulogium with which we opened our notice of this book. They fully prove, we venture to believe, the brilliant powers of description, the clearness of observation, and—when the disturbing influence of the anticipated democratic millennium is removed—the strength of judgment of Sir C. Dilke. His great defect is a certain rawness of political thought—a want of reflection in not qualifying the expectations of the present by the experience of the past, which is very natural in a young and enthusiastic politician, but which a more extended knowledge of life is pretty sure to cure. Parliamentary practice is a good antidote for a too ardent faith in political perfectibility. Above all, however, his book is a suggestive one; and that, in these days of stereotyped thought, is a

* Sir C. Dilke makes the following just remarks on our interference with native customs:—"The English idea of 'not recognising' customs or religions which exist among a large number of the inhabitants of English countries is a strange one, and productive of much harm. . . . Recognition is one thing, interference another. How far we should interfere with native customs is a question upon which no general rule can be given, unless it be that we should in all cases of proposed interference with social usages or religious ceremonies consult intelligent but orthodox natives, and act up to their advice."—II. 267.

real treat. Differing entirely as we do from Sir C. Dilke's views as to the blessing of the democratic flood which we see every day rising higher and higher around us, we have yet derived the greatest pleasure, and very much profit, from watching its "whither," so clearly foreshadowed in his pages. We always value his facts, and admire his candid statement of them, though we very frequently deduce from them conclusions the very reverse of his. We only wish we more frequently found such an agreeable, instructive, and clever adversary.

It is impossible to contemplate the progress of the Anglo-Saxon race in the New World and in Australia without a feeling of awe. The silent, ceaseless, daily advance of the frontier of civilisation in the Far West, along the whole extent of that mighty line, one end of which rests on the snows of the polar circle, and the other is scorched by the fiery heat of the tropics, is the most wonderful phenomenon of modern times; while the increase of our Australian colonies is in some respects even more astonishing. The establishment of the State of California on the shores of the Pacific, and the completion of the railroad from New York to San Francisco, have bridged the New World, and settled our sturdy descendants in permanent occupation of both its coasts. The whole continent of Australia, and most of the islands of Polynesia, are evidently destined to become the seats of the same devouring race. The Red Indian of the prairies, the miserable savage of Australia, the brave and intelligent Maori, alike wither away as soon as they come in contact with its onward march. But it will, ere long, meet a more formidable opponent; and it will be very interesting to watch the result of the impact on each other of the colonising races of the West and East — of the English and the Chinese. Already in Australia and California they have come in collision, and the

Chinese immigrants show no disposition to give place to their white fellow-colonists.

Now, wherever this hardy pushing race of ours establishes itself, it carries with it the spirit to which it owes its birth. It is the restless dissatisfied spirit of democracy which has impelled it over the sea and into the wilderness. And, as a necessary result, government by universal suffrage accompanies it in its tour of the globe. For good or for evil, then, we must accept it as an established fact that, for at least some time to come, the rule of a pure democracy will be spread over the whole of North America and Australia. What the result of this vast experiment will be is one of the most interesting subjects for human speculation.

Clearly it will, for many a long year, be strictly protective in matters of trade. Between the manufacturers of the young rising States in the West and those of the old parent State in the East there will be sore hostility. This arises from the very nature of things, and is therefore inevitable. We may lament, but we cannot avert it.

By many it has been thought that the great defect of democratic government is its weakness. To us it seems that the great thing to be dreaded in it is its strength. There is no despotism in the world so awful as the rule of a tyrant majority. From the rule of a single tyrant one may hope to shelter one's self; from that of a tyrant majority there is no escape. All the barriers of the constitution are taken by it in reverse. The defences of the people against royal or aristocratic oppression become the very instruments of the levelling tyranny of the masses. This overbearing power produces politically the worst results. It drives all the better class of citizens, all men of independent principles, to withdraw altogether from public life. People will not go on always fighting a losing game. So long as the

different parties in a state are, by the diversity of its political institutions, nearly balanced, a wholesome rivalry will exist, and all shades of opinion will be held and expressed in public. But once let a determined and overwhelming majority be fairly established in the possession of power, then all opposition will cease on the part of those whose opposition alone would be of value. The truth of this is already becoming apparent both here and in America.

In this country the ultra-Liberal party are in undisputed possession of the municipal elections. The consequence is, that the whole respectable classes have withdrawn from any share in the government of our great cities. In the United States universal suffrage has produced the same result in the government of the State. Hardly a man of independent character, of good fortune, or of original thought, will there enter political life. It is almost an insult to ask an acquaintance if he is a member of Congress. All the wealth, thought, and independence of the country is practically disfranchised, and has withdrawn from the contest. Men bankrupt in character and bankrupt in reputation, briefless barristers, ruined merchants, broken-down tradesmen, unlucky farmers, constitute the majority of the members of Congress. We much fear that, since the great lowering of the franchise last year, a tendency to a similar state of things may be observed in this country. There are symptoms of the majority of the House of Commons having, upon many great questions, consented to abandon the right of private judgment, and to give their votes, not as independent members, but as the mere delegates of their constituents.

The time when democracy is most formidable to other states is during the brief period which occasionally arises when, still preserving the energy generated by

the habit of unlimited freedom, it is controlled and directed to one object by despotic power. This it was which in ancient times led to the spread of Grecian civilisation through the conquests of Alexander, and to the vast extension of the Roman power which took place under Julius and Augustus Cæsar. This it was which in modern days led to the subjection of Europe by the legions of France under the guidance of Napoleon, and to that vast development of strength by the Federal States which ended in the crushing of the Confederate cause by Sherman and Grant. The energy of democracy directed by a single will, whether the will be that of a single despot or of a tyrant majority, is, of all combinations, that which develops the greatest amount of offensive strength, and is most dangerous to the freedom of the world. Fortunately the junction of these two forces can be but fleeting.

One more remark, and we have done. It seems to be the decree of Providence that to the Anglo-Saxon or Germanic race alone is confided the mission of colonising all those parts of our globe where the sons of Japheth can establish themselves, without coming in contact either with tropical heats or the older and less yielding races of the earth.

At one time it looked as if it would have fallen out otherwise. The Latin race, through the discovery and conquest of Mexico and Peru, seemed about to leave its impress on half the globe. But after the first great development of its expansive power, it appeared to lose all energy and vital strength. So far from constantly increasing its boundaries and winning new dominions from the waste, it cannot now maintain its own numbers, pure in blood, in the lands which itself has settled. In Mexico and most of the South American States we see every day the numbers of the pure Spaniards diminishing, and those of the half-caste mixed

racess increasing. With each advancing year the amount of white blood in these magnificent regions of the earth is lessening. Now exactly the reverse is the case in those states, whether in North America or Australia, founded by the Germanic race, coming from its homes in the British Isles, in North Germany, and in Scandinavia. These not only are increasing with a boundless rapidity, but the native tribes with whom they come in contact melt away before the mere touch of their surging civilisation, and leave no perceptible mixture of their blood in the ranks of their successors.

But it is very different when the northern races of Europe meet either with the deadly heat of the tropics or with the ancient races of the Old World. There is no example anywhere of northern Europeans being able to support their

own numbers, unmixed in blood and unrefreshed from home, in the regions of the palm. There is no trace anywhere of their supplanting in their native seats either the Asiatic or the negro. We have held India for more than a hundred years, but we have made no impress on the teeming numbers or ancient civilisation of its native inhabitants. The same remark holds good of the French in Algeria, the Dutch in Java, and the Russians in Asia. The European race in contact with the Asiatic holds the position of a conqueror, and rules it as a conquered people. But it cannot take its place. On the contrary, by governing it well it vastly increases the numbers and develops the wealth of the subject race. This is a strange and mysterious law, and points to many important conclusions which we have no space here to enter on.

CORNELIUS O'DOWD.

WORDS WITHOUT MUSIC.

WHEN a gentleman with small powers of voice and some smaller knowledge of music has obtained currency amongst his friends as a singer, being able—rare accomplishment amongst Englishmen!—to aid his efforts and drown his failures by a very humble performance on the piano, there is no limit to the extent to which he may not push his pretensions, merely on the faith of the few chords he has learned to strike, and the imposing attitude they have enabled him to assume when entreated to sing.

That wonderful mesmerism accomplished by the united effort of the voice and the instrument, that marvellous magic which comes of the blended expression of human passion by the throat and by the fingers, is a complete mystery to the unscientific listener, carried

away by a captivation so far above even his conceptions of power. He knows nothing about that curious chemistry, the result of the united powers of human expression and technical skill, and he regards the performer with admiration, perhaps with envy. It may, however, happen that by some luckless chance, by some accident of time or place, at a picnic, in a boat, or in some bachelor's quarters, the gifted songster has been persuaded, over-persuaded, to sing without an accompaniment. From that hour the illusion is dispelled for ever. It is not merely that false notes stand out in all their glaring guiltiness—it is not that the weak voice seems to tremble with its own conscious debility, but there is no body of sound, no flowing melody, no sustained appeal

to the senses, none of that harmony that wrapt one around like a garment; in fact it is a sort of "prose intoned," and we are not likely to be enraptured by that.

To the man thus involved in failure, there remains no success throughout his whole life long—at least in so far as the witnesses of that failure are concerned. He may sing himself hoarse, he may rehearse all those mild agonies of passion familiar to the piano-stool, he may pour forth his regrets or his raptures with any inflection of sound—the spell has departed, the charm is dissolved. That one unlucky act of polite compliance has done for him—he is a magician no more.

These "Wörter ohne Lieder"—for such they really are—are therefore a great peril, and a clever artist will carefully avoid them. Now, to apply, as the parsons say—to apply these words to ourselves, my brethren, a gentleman from Tipperary has been doing that which neither Mario nor Giuglini would have dared to attempt, and in this wise: In his eagerness to procure the liberation of the Fenian prisoners, he has been speaking widely throughout Ireland; and naturally indulging in those ornate forms of eloquence which are distinctively called Irish, he has been very abusive of English Governments, using freely some very hard epithets about ministers and statesmen, winding up with that "refrain" we all know so well, about seven hundred years of tyranny and oppression, Saxon perfidy, Protestantism, and the penal laws. So far all well. Listened to at Cabra or the Cobourgh Gardens, heard at Clontarf or Killybegs, these displays, with all their surroundings, have a certain fitness and appropriateness there is no disputing. The very audience, too, is in keeping with the tone of the performance, and the chance interruptions of "More power to you!" "Bad luck to them!" "Na boch-liah!" and suchlike, are all so many

meet accompaniments of the situation; but more than all these is the magic influence of the speaker's intonation, that richly-cadenced swing called "Brogue," which lends itself as happily to strong passion as to touching sentiment, and is equally good in pathos or defamation—that voluptuous sink and swell, that rapturous roll, being to the words precisely what the piano accompaniment is to the voice. We all of us who have had any experience of English songs well know what lachrymose nonsense, what tawdry imagery, what sickly sentimentality they are made of, and yet how, by the aid of a little taste and musical skill, a pleasant and flowing melody, they are carried off, and actually sound very sweetly; and one no more thinks of criticising the poetry than the pedal of the pianoforte. This is exactly the case with a great deal of third and fourth rate Irish eloquence. It is the melody, not the words, that is listened to. Of course I speak of the presence of an Irish audience.

Let the attempt be made in England, however. Change the venue from Tullaghmast to Trafalgar Square, which Mr Moore rashly persuaded himself to adventure, and see what will come of it! There you have at once the "Wörter ohne Lieder," the poor, weak, tasteless, rapid words, and none of that swelling cadence, that touching intonation, that softened down all the absurdity, and made even balderdash musical.

Of course the accomplished orator no more thought of bringing his "brogue" across the Channel than he would sport his Connemara stockings at a drawing-room. He left it—or at least as much of it as he could leave—behind him at Kingstown, and addressed the Cockneys in his best imitation of their own high-pitched and very unmusical accents, and see what has come of it. The whole press of England, from Printing-House

Square to 'Punch,' were in a sort of hysterical scream about the tinsel decorations and rampant absurdities of Irish eloquence; while, had the distinguished performer merely been singing, as he was accustomed to do, with his native accompaniment, the air would have seemed, as it was, a very pleasant little tune, and perfectly "grindable" on the organ.

Now I maintain that it would be good sense and good law to send a man six weeks to the treadmill for uttering that in a Cockney accent which, when enunciated with a rich brogue, would be amply punished by a small fine and an admonition. For in exactly the same proportion that one "does not swear to the truth of a song," one does not go into the dock to uphold the argument enunciated with the swing of a brogue.

Is it not quite clear that "Othello" or "Hamlet," when heard at the Grand Opera, convey no impressions of tragic terror? It is not easy to imagine that any man will sing himself into an act of jealousy or of vengeance. There are various pleasurable emotions that will be suggested by the performance, and our sympathies will be captivated in many ways, even to the extent of believing that if speech and language had never existed, the sounds we had been listening to would have very adequately expressed much suffering and great passion; but as we no more expect to hear a man sing before he commits a murder than to dance himself into an ecstasy of rage, we reject all idea of reality, and regard the action of the piece, not as a representation of human motives, but as a paraphrase, all the more pleasurable that the verisimilitude never goes to a painful reality. And if we are not deeply moved when Othello bids farewell to the world with an oboe accompaniment, no more are we terror-struck when certain Celtic orators denounce Saxon tyranny in a native recitative. It would be

very terrible if either Othello or Mr Isaac Butt were in earnest; but the music reassures us, and we are at ease again.

If the Premier be then really bent on ruling Ireland according to Irish instincts, let him exempt from legal penalty all expressions, however treasonable or felonious, if delivered with a brogue; let them come into the category of national music, and imply no more than "Garry Owen," or "Tatter Away,"—mere ebullitions of a high-hearted Celtism.

"Where's the Slave so Lowly" is very good treason-felony, but nobody thinks of committing the charming young lady who sings it to Kilmainham; and why prosecute these other minstrels, whose sweet recitative is not a whit more serious, nor half so dangerous?

You are an excellent people you English—you build very fine ships at Birkenhead, manufacture excellent shawls at Paisley, and make most serviceable crockery in Staffordshire; but with all that, you are a cold people, an unsympathising people, and an unimpressible people. What is not done in your own way, or said in your own words, is not done nor said aright; and after centuries of neighbourhood, you know no more of that Eastern nation that lives to the west of you—for even geographically Ireland is a bull!—than you do of Fiji. With the very smallest gleam of intelligence to guide you, you would have seen that Phœnician invectives are not dangerous 'libels, and that denunciations uttered with a brogue are not necessarily treasonable; and it is only when you insist on the singer singing without the accompaniment that the words exhibit themselves in a tasteless sentimentality and a very commonplace imagery.

That you prefer Beales is easy to see, just as you like "Bob and Joan" better, and think it sweeter melody, than "Erin Mavourneen"

or "Cushla Macree." I'll not quarrel with you about this—I only bargain that if you ask my country-

man to sing again, you'll not oblige him to do so without the instrument.

WHO'S AFRAID ?

I remember once, on board a river-steamer in America, a very powerful fellow—he stood considerably above six feet—dressed in a suit of one colour, and with a bowie-knife, which he drew from his collar behind his neck, and laid on the table with a marked emphasis, saying, as he entered, "Is there any infernal blue-nose here?" No infernal blue-nose having responded to the polite inquiry, after a pause of some seconds, he asked if there was any d—d skunk of a down-easter there? The same respectful silence ensued after this query; and now, looking fiercely around the company, and for a moment I half felt as if fixing *me*, he said, "Is there any b——y Britisher present?" I eagerly arose, and, approaching him with a most deferential demeanour, assured him what pleasure it afforded me, in my capacity as an English subject, to solicit the honour of his acquaintance—a favour which, I am proud to say, he accorded me with a very benign condescension. The incident came very forcibly to my recollection on reading the speech of the Rev. J. Ryan at the Clonmel election, in which he begins thus—"Is there any one in court afraid of British cannon?" Loud cries of "No!" replied to this demand. Now I am perfectly aware what a miserable contrast is presented by my own pusillanimity on board the river-boat with the bold attitude of the hearers of Father Ryan. I beg respectfully that it may be remembered that a bowie-knife of the West, three inches in breadth, bearing a most ugly resemblance to an ancient Roman sword, two-edged and glistening, lay on the table during *my* interrogatory; while, so far as I am aware, not a single piece of ordnance figured at the scene in Clonmel,

and that really this material element enters largely into the character of the scene.

It appeared, however, from the unanimous response of the meeting, that no one was afraid of British cannon—a declaration which, however, might have offered a more unqualified satisfaction, if it were not that the same answer was returned to the second question, "Is there any one afraid of truth?" since if the "No" so spontaneously shouted to this demand implied that the people present were prepared to hear what the world thought of them—and, indeed, of the orator that addressed them—their indifference to truth, like their courage, might have savoured of hardihood.

I made an effort—I well know how feeble it was—during the debate on the Irish Church question, to point out what a restraining force the Protestant Establishment was against the insolent aggression of Romanism, and that the only check upon the violence of the priest lay in the calm dignity of the Christian gentleman who represented the rival faith. I do not expect people unacquainted with Ireland to recognise the force of this influence, but I very confidently appeal to all who know that country and its people as to the truth of what I am asserting, that not merely were the gross superstitions and the mock miracles of the Church held in abeyance by the mere presence of pure religious culture, but that the personal ruffianism of the black-gaitered rebel was more efficiently restrained by the contrast with the blameless life and inoffensive demeanour of the Protestant clergyman than by all the appeals of the press or the

mock pastorals of the hierarchy. I know too well how difficult it is to make this clear to any one who has not lived in Ireland and known the people, and I know, too, that it would not be deemed ground enough whereon to rest a defence of the Establishment; but—shall I repeat it?—Protestantism formed the social police of the nation, and you have nothing left by which you can replace it. If you imagine Ireland will be more governable when you have made it Mexico, I can only say you will soon have an opportunity of testing your conviction. You have begun your experiment with such good faith, it would be unfair to suspect the sincerity of your motives.

Do not, however, imagine that you have more than begun that process of pacification in which you pride yourself. Your boon of religious equality is not a very old benefit, but it is forgotten already. Nor when you have confiscated the landed property of the kingdom, will you be accepted as pacificators if you do not release the Fenian prisoners! The patriotic voice of Ireland declares "Killing to be no murder," and it is a very mild corollary that deduces Treason to be no felony. It will take some time, perhaps, for the slow Saxon intelligence to realise all these things; but events teach more rapidly than mere precept.

Are you prepared, then, to release O'Donovan Rossa from the crank, and present him to the Speaker? or will you persist in maintaining, in all the indignity of imprisonment, the chosen representative of a free people? O'Connell's election for Clare brought the question of Catholic emancipation to a legal issue; who knows whether Clonmel may not prove of like moment? The patriot has only erred in that fault of which Talleyrand admonished his followers: it was *trop de zèle*. All that he was doing, all that he wanted to do, could have been done by the

Constitution; but he did not know it. It might be difficult to explain to a brigand in Greece or Italy that their respective Governments were busily elaborating the provisions of an Act which would make highway robbery unnecessary, and even murder gratuitous; and that, though the process of legal redress might be slower and less practical, it was hoped that the "wild justice" would be advantageously superseded by more prosaic and humdrum enactments. I am afraid that the Italian or the Calabrian would like "his own way best;" and I am equally afraid that when Pat comes to compare the halting steps of your pacificatory process with the summary results that ensue from what the eloquent Father Ryan calls "his own revolver," he too will like his own way best. What security of tenure can compare with having no landlord? What compensation for improvement can vie with spare cash to buy powder and ball?

Remember this—and it is worth remembering—that in all you do for Ireland you have two taskmasters, who, though they work occasionally in concert, have distinct aims and objects,—the priest and the peasant. You must satisfy both. For the former you must abrogate old laws; for the latter you must make new ones. How long you may reconcile yourself to listen to such language as the national press of Ireland at present rewards you with—how long you will endeavour to reconcile with the ways of good government a people who make all government impossible—are questions between yourself and your endurance; but if it be your intention to concede everything, to abrogate all that adheres to England in Ireland as fully and as thoroughly as you have done with respect to the Church,—I would only say, Do it at once. Strip the landlord of his property, but spare his life. Establish Popery in the kingdom, and let those

who care to remain in Ireland after a certain date know that they stay at their own peril, and that, whatever be the risks they incur, the

Imperial Government accepts no responsibility, nor will pledge itself to try rebels. Then shall we see—Who's afraid?

NEW MEASURES AND OLD MEN.

If on the introduction of railroad travelling into England we had persisted in applying to the new-made mode of transit whatever we could of the machinery of the old system that preceded it—if, instead of station-masters and pointsmen, telegraph clerks and stokers, we had employed all the old material of the mail-coach days, and engaged coachmen, guards, and helpers, the likelihood is that we should have sacrificed some of the efficiency of the scheme to ideas of economy or thrift.

Of all classes of people, besides, who would exert themselves to acquire the use and practice of a new machinery, none would be less likely to display zeal or activity than those who had passed their lives in the exercise of the system that was now abandoned, not alone from the natural dislike men feel to be voted obsolete and behind their age, which certainly would result from having to go to school again in mature life, but also from that very well understood motive that makes men averse to new-fangled notions, which, if adopted, would involve in a sort of barbarism all the habits and ways of their own early years. In fact, nothing could be devised more likely to render the new discovery defective and unpopular, than to employ in its service those whose knowledge and acquirements it had rendered bygone. Instead of these people applying themselves steadily and patiently to learn a new career, we should find them ingeniously trying to adapt the new system to their old long-practised habits. The coachman would be keeping his time by all the old artifices of "making play" here and breathing

a bit there, and the guard would be satisfied that a blast of his horn should be sufficient to keep the road clear, and apprise the people at the next "change" to be on the alert for his arrival. To teach these men that a mile of ground was a matter of two minutes, that a danger-signal was an emergency to be measured by seconds, that a fractional increase or decrease of speed signifies to run into or be run into by some one before or behind you, to transfer all the adaptiveness to the management of a blood-team to the use of a boiler, would be one of the most hopeless of all imaginable undertakings.

Are we then, you would ask—are we to turn them adrift upon a world that has no longer any need of them, or are we to burden ourselves with the support of so many useless and unprofitable people? I reply, Pension them by all means: infinitely better charge the budget with their maintenance than damage the whole character of a great invention, and destroy the working efficiency of a noble discovery. You are ready to interrupt me here, and ask, Why all these shrewd warnings and cautions about a danger so little likely to be incurred? Who is insane enough to do anything so shortsighted and so foolish as this? and my answer is, The thing has been actually done; the experiment has been made; and the results are before our eyes—being enacted, I may say—while I yet write. Look towards the east of Europe and you will see it all.

When Austria was driven by the course of events to lose her possessions in Italy and her influence in Germany, to fall back upon herself,

she very wisely bethought her, that for the benefit of internal resources, for the development of native industry and enterprise, there was nothing for it but a constitutional form of government,—that free institutions are the best education for a nation, and that law and order are never so successfully instilled as when the people are themselves interested in the edicts they have agreed to obey. Baron Beust, to whom this change first commended itself, went to work with a will. He instituted the Parliamentary form of rule, Ministerial responsibility, freedom of discussion, freedom of the press, trial by jury, municipal reform, with a large share of local self-government. It was not easy, if even possible, in a country inhabited by such a mixture of races to consult or provide for autonomy, but he did so to the fullest extent as regarded Hungary, and made considerable concessions elsewhere, particularly on the "Littoral," with reference to education in the Italian-speaking provinces of the empire. If he failed to conciliate the Slavics it was perhaps less his fault than that their pretensions were put forward in a way that evidently threatened the disruption of the empire—for what is called "Confederation" could certainly have no other interpretation—not to add that the discontent of these people was nourished and stimulated by Russian intrigue.

Austria, meanwhile, went forward, eagerly bent on extending to her people the largest measure of liberty. Of course such a procedure could meet with little sympathy at St Petersburg, who had to think of Poland; nor even at Berlin, where, in fashioning the new machinery of a North-German Confederation, the question of individual right was to be as little recognised as might be. Still Baron Beust went ahead, not troubling himself very much about his neighbours, nor, so far as one could see, much disposed to hamper his rule with needless

complications of either alliance or animosity.

Now all this had been admirable in every respect, if it were not that in working the new system he had encumbered himself with the old agency—that is, that in carrying out the active life of a Liberal Administration he had burdened himself with the wearisome formalism and dreary delays of an old and worn-out bureaucracy. To any one conversant with the soul-depressing slowness of Austrian official life in the good old days of Metternich and Schwarzenberg, when the most insignificant document of every department had to be copied and re-copied, and docketed and registered and re-registered, and then transmitted to some one else who did all this over again by way of check, till either the event which evoked the correspondence had so changed its aspect as to make the decision inapplicable, or, as often happened, to be utterly ignored altogether; to any one who had seen the daily life of "Schreiberei" pursued—from the highest to the lowest officer of the State—from the Cabinet Minister to the corporal,—it would seem as though no human existence could ever be prolonged to an extent to reap the benefits of such departmental care and protection.

And yet it is with this agency—dry, formal, minute, and methodical—that Austria tries to apply the last new discoveries in Liberal government. What would they say at Woolwich if they were told that no more cannon should be founded till they had worked up all the old pig-iron into smooth bores or breech-loaders? Here is this very experiment being tried before our eyes!

No wonder if the machinery of the State works harshly and ungenially, where every *employé* is an obstructive and an opponent, not seeking to accommodate himself to the play of a new mechanism, but trying how far he can mould its operations to his own long-

formed habits, and to ways he is too old to abandon.

As an instance of what can come of such a combination, the events now happening in South Dalmatia are sufficiently in point. While the officials of the locality were laboriously copying out the instructions of the new law on the militia conscription, making the fourfold detail of registering here and endorsing there—sending certified copies to this man and abstracts to that—the Russian agents, along with certain Montenegrin spies, penetrating the province in every direction, had ample time to propagate the intelligence that by their enlistment for the landwehr the people were virtually accepting service in the regular army; and under the pretext of being enrolled for the protection of their own homes, they were actually subjecting themselves to be drafted to the utmost limits of the empire, to serve on the far-away confines of Poland, or in the dreaded swamps of the Lower Danube.

A very little foresight and precaution might have saved all misconstruction on this head; the discontent was not very deep rooted, and the spirit of the population on the whole was not inimical to imperial rule. Bureaucratic apathy, however, easily takes the forms of insolence and superciliousness. The peasantry, resenting these, rose, burned the baptismal registries, destroyed all the records of conscription, and defied the authorities. The Government sent troops, and the mountaineers, fully as warlike in their native fastnesses,

defied the soldiery. The first care of the military commander was to garrison and provision the various small forts, which, at distances through this wild region, serve as pivots for a force to act on. The peasants did not hesitate to meet these detachments, and, so far as rumour goes, in some cases overpowered them.

To bring up the regiments to a war standard, the new recruits of the last levy have been sent forward; and although it is reported that they have behaved well in the field, the hospitals are full of sick, and a call for an increased staff of surgeons has been forwarded to Vienna.

No one pretends to believe that an outbreak of sufficient magnitude to call for 12,000 regular troops to meet it could have arisen on such grounds as these; but Russia has taken excellent care to begin her operations at a very distant frontier of the empire, and on a quarrel eminently social in its character, just as the title to an estate is contested by an action at law for some small and insignificant holding. Still I persist in maintaining that if the new laws of the kingdom were expounded with the willing activity of men who were working in accordance with their spirit, it would not be so easy to make Dalmatians the dupes of Russians or tools of Montenegrins. The old musket drill will not do with the new breech-loader, nor will old Austrian bureaucracy consist with modern liberty, nor with the demands of men, who, to be ruled, must be reasoned with.

TALK—"GAMBITS."

In one of the Occasional Notes of 'Pall Mall' a short time ago I read a clever suggestion. It was apropos to a notice of Mr Longman's little book on chess openings, that it would be doing the world good service to devise

something of this sort of conversation, so that people, with a few easy "gambits" in their head, could while away time pleasantly, instead of maintaining a rigid silence, or keeping up that species of bald disjointed chat which is still worse.

The difficulties are, however, considerable. First of all, the habit of introducing people to each other has in great degree fallen into disuse, and, save by that formal presentation by which you are con-signed to take a certain person in to dinner, you may happen not to know, or be known to, any one in a drawing-room. What gives the especial value to the chess openings is the fact that, as you may be totally ignorant of the strength of your adversary, a few cautious moves, to which the corresponding replies are known to you, enable you to measure in some degree your opponent, and see how far it might be safe for you to play boldly or the reverse.

If, for instance, he answer your gambit by the appropriate move, you are at once aware that he has given some study to the game, and you address yourself more cautiously to the board. In conversation, however, as you do not at least always play to win, as you simply desire to "have a game," your object is merely by any opening—any break—to give some opportunity for the other player to move a piece, and thus give rise to that pleasant interchange of agreement or opposition which makes up TALK. Now I would here beg to insinuate that, for any advantageous analogy to conversation, Whist is infinitely preferable to Chess. First of all, in chess the exact equality with which the two players confront each other at first has no resemblance to real life, where nothing is so rare as to find a Mr Disraeli pitted against a Mr Gladstone. This stern uncongenial condition of exact equality gives the whole character to the game, and makes it as unlike real life as possible, where what we call chance enters so much into everything. To divest social intercourse of this character of the intellectual duel is the great object of all who care for pleasant companionship; and in the diversity of men's tastes and tem-

pers, in the different measures of their capacities, this difficulty is not hard to overcome.

Between chess and conversation the analogies are few. "The queen's pawn two" game, indeed, opens like the talk about the weather, and may be the opening of an able or a very inferior player. The gambit which sacrifices a pawn to the adversary for the sake of an advantage in position, resembles the bait of a man who throws out a paradox to see whether you will gravely make it an object of attack, or simply take it as the expression of a caprice, or a glove thrown to provoke battle. The late Archbishop Whately was rather an adept at this sort of stratagem, and if he hadn't practised it so persistently and unmercifully, would have deserved the gratitude of many who remembered how often he dissipated the dull reserve of a dinner by some of these sallies.

Whately, however, had no originality, nor had he any readiness. He came out with so many rounds of service ammunition; and if he fired them off before the end of the evening, he was harmless afterwards. To enlarge one of these "bagged" conundrums, and follow it at a sharp pace over everything, was his delight; and for the first or perhaps the second time one witnessed this, it was amusing. He, however, repeated his stories to satiety; and a very brief acquaintance with him gave one the solution of every one of his riddles, and the key to each of the *concetti*, by which he used to startle the decorum of a dinner-party. Lord Melbourne had a charming turn for those pleasant little paradoxes which are so suggestive of spirited talk, and with him they were real impromptus. They came out of the matter in hand, and seemed actually like sudden flashes of a right view of a subject, which a strong light had not hitherto so forcibly displayed before him. Then he had that wonderful geniality which seasons

conversation for every appetite; and above all, he had that width of sympathy, without which no really good talker ever gained pre-eminence, which enabled him not only to hit the very sentiment, but often to catch the very expression, the man he was addressing would have used. The Irish Chief-Justice Bushe was the only one I could think of placing on equality with him for that sort of easy talk in which scholarship blends with great knowledge of life; and with this Bushe had a vein of native drollery and wit which are not to be found out of the Celtic temperament.

When Sir William Smith, Lord Guillamore, and Mr Bushe, were the three "chiefs" of their several law courts, it was a constant question amongst their respective followers to which should be given the palm of conversational superiority; but in reality Bushe's claim was indisputably the highest. For epigrammatic neatness, and an incisiveness that divided a subject as keenly as the knife of a surgeon, Sir William was unsurpassed; while for a sarcastic humour that recalled Swift, Lord Guillamore was distinguished beyond every man of his day. "I don't know that there is any secret in conversational success," said Bushe one day, to some one who questioned him; "I believe it all lies in two easy rules: Be always natural, and be good-natured." He assuredly practised as he preached.

For a polished elegance without a trace of pedantry, and for a neatness of expression which continually verges on wit, and seems only not so by the careful abstention of the speaker, there is nothing possibly, among Englishmen at least, can be pitted against Sir Henry Bulwer. If there be something tantalising in feeling that he has not said all he might on a subject, he consoles you by the thought that he has said something you had not heard from another, and certainly in a form, and with a turn of expression, none other could

have hit upon. As a *raconteur* of an incident he has no equal out of France; and no Frenchman can surpass him in the adroitness with which he can make the moral of his story serve the purpose of his argument. His name has escaped me against a determination I had made not to quote living conversationalists, but there is no one who could give such valuable hints for good talking; and, from the form of his mind they would take the shape of short aphorisms, easy to remember, and admirable for use.

The "talk-openings"—take them even in the simple form of antepandial utterances—could be communicated only by masters in the art; for it is in conversation as in medicine, that nothing but the "Dons" can be teachers. The preceptive power of the good talker is perhaps the most striking of his gifts. The intuitive appreciation of the tastes, the tempers, and the prejudices of his hearers—what they would require in the way of sentiment, what they would bear in the way of scandal, where they must be instructed, where astonished, where the talker can insinuate a slight interest on his own behalf, and where a little modest self-disparagement heightens the zest of an anecdote, how to illustrate where there is no time for argument—and all these without seeming to engross unfairly the time of the company.

Kings and kaisers are strong in conversational gambits. They make a special study of talk-openings; but as they are always "played up to," and never, or at least very rarely, puzzled by an adverse move, their game is easy enough. They can talk Protection with an old Tory, and discuss Providence with a Bishop, and yet never suffer either to get beyond the stage of blessings and thanksgivings. In the same way they speak of painless surgery to the doctor, and the Suez Canal to the engineer, and yet it is just possible that each

of these persons would feel the flattery of being addressed on anything rather than what savours of a *métier*. Generally it is only a very young man likes to be talked to about his own career. Before his ambition has had time to be blunted by defeats, he dreams of very high successes; and you are quite safe in prognosticating the Woolsack to the newly-called barrister, or the command of an army to a young sub. in the goose-step.

All ante-prandial talk should be of a character that incurs no risk of a dissentient opinion. Mild praises of something that it is safe to praise are good gambits. The weather, the crops, something that the Queen has done, or the Princess of Wales has said, are never hazardous.

If dinner be unavoidably delayed, and if a slight diversion in the shape of provocation be deemed advisable, a quotation from Carlyle, taken at random, will always do. It will be sure to offend somebody; and even when the matter of it be unobjectionable, the manner will as certainly outrage some taste, and jar upon some susceptibility.

Indeed, I think Carlyle and Ruskin might serve as conversational "bitters," taken to give an appetite, but never accepted as articles of diet, and only administered in the smallest liqueur-glasses.

If the flavour be found too pungent for ladies, let them take "Martin Tupper" instead.

A SMALL CLERICAL ERROR.

In that very interesting discourse in which Bishop Temple took his farewell of Rugby, there are certain points to which exception might fairly be taken. I will, however, advert to one only, and to that one simply, on the ground of its being a matter on which the eloquent speaker was evidently less qualified to pronounce than many others who could lay no claim to either his attainments or his capacity.

Dr Temple opines that the higher classes have much to learn from the humbler; and I would make no objection to the assertion if he had not added—as regards justice; it being his opinion that among the cultivated men and women refinement prevails over the sense of equity; and that the thought of whether what is done be done in accordance with good breeding and good manners, weighs more heavily than if done with reference to sound principles of morality.

Now it is not on the score of any abstract proposition I would say that the judgment of the humble man could be a better guide than the dictum of the cultivated man—

it is on the questions which pertain to his daily experience of life—to the wants that beset him—to the straits by which he is surrounded—to the best modes by which his ordinary difficulties can be met—to the ways in which help aids him best and speediest—to the sort of education that most adapts him to the mode of his life—to where interference is useful and kindly and acceptable, and where it is simply inconvenient, unpleasant, and distasteful. In all these themes the poor man will unfold stores of knowledge peculiarly and specially his own; and will show he has for his own daily purposes mastered questions which scientific heads call sanitary, or chemical, or social, or statistic, as it may be. Ask the doctor, who knows more about the poor than any one, whether he has not learned much from the thoughtful experience of humble people, whose simple habits of observation are undisturbed by all attempt or desire to make them conform to a theory; how they watch the changeful influences of weather on disease—how they note how the very hours of the

night bear upon the recurrence of certain symptoms—how their very superstitions are but as formulæ, as it were, to express some combination which is above their power of explanation. Mark the way in which a shepherd or a sailor will sum up the signs of coming weather—the marvellous acuteness with which he will distinguish between the true and the false indications—the profound knowledge he will exhibit of nature in all her moods of change—and, lastly, how he has educated his senses to investigate problems that science can only deal with by aid of instruments and inventions.

There is in one of Scott's conversations a touching record of what he himself had gleaned from intercourse with uneducated men and women, which might make ordinary people very careful how they undervalue such sources of knowledge. I wish my memory could help me to the passage—and I dread to mar it by a garbled quotation; for like the people who remember the facts of geometry, but have forgotten the proofs, so it is with me. I can retain some traces of other men's wisdom, but have lost the clue by which they gained them.

It is not, however, to this part of the venerable Bishop's address I would draw attention. It is rather to the contrast he endeavours to establish between the condition of society abroad and that which we find at home. He seems to think that the sympathy between the higher and lower classes is stronger and closer in France, Germany, and Italy, than in England; and that this better state of things is owing to a certain genial culture in the higher ranks which forbids them to separate themselves from their poorer brethren. Now, if he had known the Continent better, he would have known that this is not the case. The familiarity, almost at times verging on equality, which subsists between the extreme conditions of society

abroad, depends upon the simple fact that the real differences between them are marvellously small and few. They are separated by conventionalities, and little else. The landlord living on his estate has, outside the fact of his wealth and his power to use it, scarcely anything to distinguish him from the peasant. A little better food and a little better clothing, perhaps, would mark his condition; but there would be nothing in the tone of his conversation, the range of his knowledge, the sort of interests which would engage or the class of topics that would amuse him, to remove him from the daily life and occupations of the humbler man. On religion, on politics, on the events of the little world around them, they would be certain to think alike, and, what is more, to express themselves alike, when they discussed them. Those customs of cleanliness and order—the fifty odd small requirements of the gentleman—which exist with us, and to dispense with which even for a day becomes a serious privation—have no place here. The "*Illustrissimo*" lives in the corner of a house as large as Buckingham Palace, and that corner very meanly—indeed miserably—furnished. Three straw-bottomed chairs, a round table with a tea-service—never used—a looking-glass, a gilt console, and a bust of Victor Emmanuel, comprise the articles of a *salon*. Of a "tub," or of any form of bath whatever, he knows no more than does a mole of a microscope. He has none of those innumerable little wants whose very slavery is a discipline of civilisation, and consequently it is no hardship to him to take his cup of black coffee on the same bench with a labouring man whose toilet has taken about as much time as his own, whose chin is as unshaven, and whose hands as innocent of soap. There is no doubt that all these similarities of habit and condition are very equalising elements, and conduce to a

great freedom in intercourse, and in that conversation in which the recurrence of some reference to his rank as the Signor Conte or Herr Baron, alone defines the different stations of the speakers.

It is needless to say how much alike two such men will feel on every subject that could come before them. The essential difference of wealth will not separate them, because it is wealth unemployed in the diffusion of luxury or refinement. It exists in the books of the banker, and not in the daily habits of the possessor. The little daily newspaper, ill printed and worse written, forms the staple intelligence of each—where each finds his prejudices fostered, his hopes illustrated, and his fears shadowed forth, in a language so like his own that its persuasiveness is complete.

Last of all will come that grand leveller the Church, in which each not alone believes, but believes in precisely the same way, taking the

same view of its powers, and forming the same estimate of its pretensions.

If, then, the like classes in our country are not linked together by so close a sympathy as we see here, surely it is not without a "plea in mitigation." And be it remembered that, in this compact of equalisation, if the peasant gains something, the man of station loses much—sitting down contented, as he does, with certain material advantages, and having no goal of a higher civilisation or a more cultivated existence before him.

The Herr Graf smokes a somewhat better tobacco and has more leisure than the Bauer. Out of these there is not much to choose between them. If Dr Temple, then, desires to see a closer union between different conditions of society with us, surely it is not at this price he would purchase the boon! And that such is the cost there can be no doubt.

THE COMING SESSION.

THERE is something inexpressibly *naïve*, not to say pleasant, in the tone which the organs of the present Government are assuming while they discuss the probable acts of the coming session and speculate on their issues. The moderation with which they deliver their minds is very edifying. That which above all things they deprecate is, that into the debates with which we are threatened, any other than the purest spirit of patriotism should enter. Party is and has long been the bane of this free commonwealth. If party spirit be suffered to exercise its old pernicious influence over us we shall do no good, nor arrive on any subject bearing upon the best interests of the country except at the lamest possible conclusions. We are warned, indeed, that the matter at once to be submitted to Parliament is both delicate and important. Mr Gladstone will inaugurate the opening of the new session with a "most elaborate bill for dealing with the tenure of Irish land." And we further learn that the subject is one "which might, no doubt, excite the fiercest animosities." Men are most moved, it appears, by what affects their personal interests (a truly marvelous discovery); and "an Irish Land Bill will affect the interests of a class much larger and more powerful than the Protestant clergy." But though all this be true, and the incidents naturally arising out of it obvious enough, the supporters of the present Government appear to be sanguine that nature will not be allowed to have her way. "An insufficiently considered or an unskillfully drawn bill, might destroy the submissive unanimity of the Liberal members, rouse anew the activity of the Orange zealots, and hinder the consideration of almost every other measure. From such

a fate, however, we hope to be delivered," how, or by what process, Mentor does not condescend to explain. On the other hand, if it be on the other hand, "a long fight on tenures and evictions would be far worse than the present controversies on the Irish Church, for it would have the effect of embittering the tenant against the landlord, and giving excuse for continued agitation." How the feelings of the tenant towards the landlord, and of the landlord towards the tenant, are to be made more bitter than they seem at present to be, the sage who thus instructs while he soothes, and aims at conciliating, has not stopped to make clear. All that he does is to assume that there is reason to hope better things, because public opinion has been gradually tending to agreement during the recess, and thus smoothing the way both for the Government and the Opposition. At the same time it is clearly to be understood that this shading away of public opinion ought to have run, if it has not run, entirely in one direction. "The Government would be universally condemned by the Liberal party if it hesitated to bring in a really sufficient measure; if, from a desire to conciliate foes or to spare friends, it were to present a bill which should slur over difficulties, cleverly contriving to leave things as they are. A bill intended only to pass would be the reproach, and perhaps the ruin, of the Government."

So run the arguments, if arguments they deserve to be called, of those clever and not very scrupulous individuals whom Mr Gladstone and Mr Bright contrive to engage as their scouts or precursors in the coming Parliamentary campaign. Their business is to deal as much as possible in generalities. They do not pretend to have been admitted

more than other people to a knowledge of what is in preparation, but they are satisfied that it is at once stringent and moderate, sweeping, and at the same time, in the main, conciliatory. "The Government measure must, and of course will, do all that justice demands for the tenant, and thus satisfy the hopes of the most able and impartial men who have studied the condition of Ireland. On the other hand, the recent discussions forbid the fear that any rash and unsound proposal will be submitted to Parliament." What recent discussions are alluded to? The appeals of the Tenant League, with Mr Gladstone's meaningless replies to them? or the bolder remonstrances of the Romish priests, who look to revolvers and the "tumbling of landlords" as the surest and easiest mode of settling the difficulty? Or does the political prophet who thus prophesies smooth things count upon the effect produced on public opinion by the recent distribution of the army in Ireland into flying columns, and the diligence with which reinforcements are thrown into the country from day to day? Whatever his anticipations may be, and on whatever ground rested, there seem to us, at the present moment, to be no very manifest tokens of their receiving a speedy fulfilment. The rioting at the Longford election, the shooting down of policemen by the brace, the recent murder of an unoffending egg merchant for no assignable reason except that he drove a prosperous trade, do not hold out any marked assurance of public tranquillity. And as to landlord-shooting, that appears to grow only more brisk and successful from day to day. But this is not all. The authority to which we now refer counts upon even a surer means of tranquillising Ireland than any which the Tenant League suggests, or "the landlord-tumbling" priesthood or even the soldiery can supply. He has not seen the bill; he

professes to know nothing of its tenor, but he is satisfied that it will be such as "to secure the assent of thinking men on either side of the House." Now thinking men, we are inclined to believe, seldom commit themselves beforehand. They are certainly not prone to take leaps in the dark twice in their lives. The thinking men on either side of the House will therefore, in all probability, be prepared themselves to criticise and to listen to the criticisms of others, whether these be hostile to a measure confessedly experimental, or the reverse. Nor is it the habit of thinking men, for the mere sake of helping a Government out of a difficulty, to say that wrong is right, or an unwise policy a wise policy. There were quite as many thinking men who condemned the measure of last session as approved it, even though some of them, against their better judgment, helped to carry it through. We are disposed to believe, then, that these, at all events, will not again allow themselves to postpone the interests of the commonwealth to those of faction, satisfied, as they must now be, that their worst fears in regard to what would follow on the suppression of the Irish Church have been more than realised.

While one section of the Ministerial press takes this view of our condition and prospects, another, which professes to be more guided by the precepts of reason and philosophy, labours under serious apprehension lest the Government should, from sheer excess of strength, bring evil on the country. The political prospects of the new year would, it appears, be perhaps more cheerful if they were likely, as in former times, to be affected by the balance of parties. An Opposition, as long as it possesses power, affords some security against imprudent legislation, although it may sometimes interfere with necessary improvements. But under the remarkable management of Mr Disraeli, according to our candid antagonists,

his party has been reduced to comparative insignificance. "And in future elections its numbers will be still further reduced ;" for the ballot, which, we are told, "will probably be adopted by the present Parliament, would, at least in the first instance, transfer several county seats to the Liberal party : and the changes effected in boroughs, though perhaps it may not be uniform in character, will, on the whole, tend in the same direction." Nor do the misfortunes of the unhappy Tories end there. "The control even of the House of Lords is escaping, not from the Conservative party, but from Mr Disraeli." There may be some truth in this latter assertion, ungenerously as the assertion is made. The House of Lords is certainly not what it used to be when the late Lord Derby guided its deliberations. Nor will it be Mr Gladstone's fault if the House of Lords stop short of getting beyond the control of any human being except perhaps himself. A Minister who, within a few months of attaining to power, lavishes coronets with so free a hand that several of his own adherents decline the honour that is pressed on them, is little likely to suffer any regard to the balance of power in the State to stand between him and the accomplishment of any object on which he has set his heart. Ambition of this sort, however, may overleap itself. The coronet on his brow has a marvellous effect in weaning your Liberal statesman from excess in Liberalism. We suspect that both Lord Overstone and Lord Belper are at this moment a great deal more frightened at the turn which public affairs seem to be taking than many of their seniors on the peerage-roll. At all events, they have wonderfully changed in their general views of things since, as Messrs Jones Loyd and Strutt, members of the House of Commons, both used to magnify their own order, and speak lightly of

other powers than that of the people. Be this, however, as it may, we confess ourselves very sceptical with regard to the permanent subservency of the peers of England to any Minister, so long as they are permitted to exercise their rights as a separate branch of the Legislature. At the same time, it would be absurd to pretend indifference to the dangers with which they and we are threatened, far less to ignore their reality. The House of Lords yielded too much a year ago not to have exposed themselves this year, and the next, and the year after, to enormous pressure. Whether they will be able to sustain it must depend very much on the line of action which it may please the Whig rather than the Tory portion of their body to adopt, and still more upon the support which they are likely to receive from the "thinking men," of whom it is assumed that they are already converted, in Parliament and out of it, to pure Gladstonianism. Just hear the Ministerial advocate on that head :—

"The Ministerial bill is perhaps not yet prepared, but, whatever be its purport, it will certainly be passed. The few remaining Whigs will perhaps dislike it as strongly as the members of the Opposition, but their hands will be tied. If the late rumours of dissension in the Cabinet had been well founded, the retirement of half his colleagues would not have weakened Mr Gladstone's hold on the House of Commons ; or if he were, in spite of probability, encountered by opposition, he might still coerce the House by threatening an appeal to the constituencies. There may be different opinions as to his policy and his character, nor indeed is it easy to form a definite judgment on one of the most complex of problems ; but whether his patriotic earnestness, or his liability to be possessed by fixed ideas, is selected for praise or for comment, it is certain that he holds for the moment the most commanding position which has been occupied by any Minister since the time of Pitt. The Government which carried the first Reform Bill was, until its work was accomplished, equally

popular ; but Lord Grey never stood, as Mr Gladstone does, apart from his colleagues, and in popular estimation above all of them, with the doubtful exception of Mr Bright. If they reject any of his proposals, they may, if they can, change his opinion, and they have always the alternative of resigning. It would be easy to supply their places with more docile partisans, who would receive the same support in Parliament, though perhaps they might not be equally entitled to its confidence."

"*Non noster hic sermo.*" Not thus are we prepared, Tories though we be, to speak of such men as are, unhappily for themselves, associated with Mr Gladstone and Mr Bright in the affairs of Government. Much less can we accept, without looking narrowly into it, the conclusion that Mr Gladstone is our only inevitable Prime Minister. His position was, we admit, or it seemed to be last session, a very commanding one. The cry which he raised just as the old Parliament was in its death-agony found a ready echo in Scotland, Ireland, and Wales ; and on the strength of his assurances that he had discovered a certain cure for disaffection, the new constituencies, especially in these sections of the empire, pronounced in his favour. He was lifted into office for the purpose of achieving one particular object, and he did achieve it. But it does not necessarily follow that the success which attended an effort to destroy has assured to the destroyer that autocracy in the State which is here assigned to him. Mr Gladstone's mode of accomplishing the object which he professed to seek went very far apart from the process which, being yet before the constituencies, it suited his purpose to shadow out. Nobody pretends to deny that when his plans came to be developed from the Treasury benches they were listened to with dismay by more than the Tory opposition. Mr Wykham Martin did not stand alone in deprecating the cruelty and injustice against

which he lacked courage to protest. Indeed it was only their recent experience of the effect of disunion among themselves that kept the Liberal party, or a considerable portion of them, from breaking out in 1869 into open rebellion. Mr Gladstone's bearing, likewise, in browbeating and silencing all criticism, gave as much offence as the wanton harshness of his policy. That, too, was put up with, because the Liberals shrank from the discredit that would attend a second quarrel among themselves within an interval of two years. But bullying, though it may serve the ends of the Minister who has recourse to it once or twice, will not be tolerated as a system in a British House of Commons. It is bad enough to be spoken of as "a subservient majority"—to have their behaviour described in their own newspapers as a "submissive unanimity ;" but a too frequent or too rude appeal to the spirit of dictation in the House itself may provoke, when the incident is at once least expected and most inconvenient, a disposition to kick among the Liberal majority. In like manner it appears to us that, in counting, as his friends of the press seem to do, on the hold which Mr Gladstone has established over the constituencies, they go a great deal farther than the facts of the case will warrant. His coming measure, if it satisfy the party of movement in Ireland, is very little likely to be agreeable to the party of order elsewhere ; and within the party of order we include a vast majority of the voters in England and Scotland, whether they march at this moment under the banner of Liberalism or Conservatism. But is it probable that Mr Gladstone's coming measure will or can give satisfaction, even to the party of movement in Ireland itself ? If he play into the hands of the priests, will the Fenians stand by him ? If he try to conciliate the Fenians, will the priests endure it ? and in

either case is it conceivable that the Protestant people of either England or Scotland will permit him to hand over the Irish, tied and bound, to the guidance of the Romish hierarchy, or to legislate so as to render a dissolution of the union inevitable within a year or two at the farthest? It is easy enough to talk or write about patriotism, unanimity, and the absence of party spirit, while yet the points to be submitted for the consideration of the Legislature are under a cloud. We shall see, by-and-by, when the clouds lift, what these points really are, and then, and only then, will it be known how far the majority which carried its submissiveness to an extreme last session is still disposed to merit the not very enviable character which the Minister and his familiars seek to fix upon them.

Again, we do not know how far the noblemen and gentlemen especially referred to in the subjoined extract are disposed to conform to the views concerning themselves that are set forth in it; but we are quite satisfied of this, that before submitting to the justice of the inference which is drawn from it, the public will carefully consider what it is that Mr Gladstone has done for the country in times past, and what, therefore, he may be expected to achieve for it in time coming. Certainly, to predicate of any one man—if he were as gifted as Pitt, and Fox, and Burke, and Peel, all in combination—that he, and only he, can govern the country, and that, therefore, “his defects and eccentricities must be put up with,” is giving a good deal farther than we are inclined to believe will be accepted by “the thinking men” of this constitutional monarchy:—

“It is not altogether satisfactory that the welfare of the nation should depend on the resolutions of one impulsive statesman; but if any politician doubts whether it is desirable that Mr Gladstone should be Prime Minister, he has only to consider the state of affairs

which would follow if he were unfortunately to be disabled or removed from the conduct of affairs. The Liberal party is not prepared with any available successor, and it would be impossible, as it would be undesirable, that Mr Disraeli should return to power. Mr Bright, who alone among his colleagues holds a great and independent position, even if he were not unfitted by his tastes and habits to conduct an Administration, would not command the confidence of the moderate section of the Liberal party. Mr Lowe, Mr Cardwell, Mr Bruce, and Mr Childers, render valuable services in their several departments, but each of them would probably acknowledge that he was not capable of succeeding to Mr Gladstone. The large experience of Lord Granville and Lord Clarendon is better appreciated by Parliament than by the country, and a peer at the head of the Government is practically dependent on the leader of the House of Commons. The most vehement of Mr Gladstone’s assailants ought to confess, on reflection, that it would be more difficult to do without him than with him. As *Æschylus*, according to *Aristophanes*, said in the *Elysian fields* of *Alcibiades*, a lion’s whelp or an irresistible Minister may be an inconvenience in a constitutional State, but when he is once in power it only remains to put up with his defects and his eccentricities.”

And first let us consider what Mr Gladstone’s position is, and the process by which he has achieved it. Mr Gladstone is compared to Mr Pitt. “He holds, *for the moment*, the most commanding position which has been occupied by any Minister since the time of Pitt.” But Mr Gladstone surpasses Mr Pitt, whether in perpetuity or for the moment only we are not told. “The Government which carried the first Reform Bill was, until its work was accomplished, equally popular; but Lord Grey *never stood, as Mr Gladstone does, apart from his colleagues*, and in popular estimation above them all, with the doubtful exception of Mr Bright.” A Prime Minister “who stands apart from his colleagues,” whether he trust to the favour of the Crown or to “popular estimation,” is not fit to be the head of the Govern-

ment in a free country. Call him what you will, he is a Dictator and nothing else ; and the costly farce of associating with him in the Cabinet ten or twelve highly-salaried dummies, may just as well be dispensed with. But so firm is Mr Gladstone's grasp of the reins of office, and so essential his manipulation of them to the existence of the commonwealth, that if by any evil chance they were to escape from his hands, ruin must follow. "The Liberal party is not prepared with any available successor, and it would be impossible, as it would be undesirable, that Mr Disraeli should return to power." Such is the judgment of the organs of the party which counts among its foremost men Lord Clarendon, Lord Granville, Mr Lowe, Mr Cardwell, Mr Bruce, and Mr Childers. Now we all know that there was a time when, supported by Mr Cardwell, and other equally able men—disciples, like himself, of Sir Robert Peel—Mr Gladstone entertained few political opinions in common with the Whigs as Lords Clarendon and Granville represent them ; while his attitude towards that section of the Liberal party of which Mr Childers may be taken to be a fair specimen, was one of unmeasured hostility. How does it happen that he is at this moment not only on relations of amity with both sections, but their master, and the master of a third section also, which is neither Whig nor Radical, though it would be at least as dangerous as either if only it were numerically more powerful than it is, having Mr Robert Lowe at its head ? It would require far more space than we can now command to answer that question fully. To do justice to so wide a subject, we must needs analyse the whole character of the man, and show how one principle after another has yielded in him to the force of a temptation which would have led him on to an analogous, though diametrically opposite result, had

the progress of public events been different from what it was. For the present it may suffice to say, that in the impulsiveness of which Mr Gladstone is popularly regarded as the victim, we entirely disbelieve. A steadier motive-power than impulse has guided him through the whole of his tortuous course. Mr Gladstone arrived, soon after entering upon public life, at a great, perhaps an exaggerated, estimate of his own powers. He was not in office six months before he believed in the destiny which was to make him, sooner or later, First Minister of the English Crown. Had Peel lived, and—which we cannot help believing that he would have done—regained his place as leader of the great Conservative party, then Mr Gladstone would have probably remained a Conservative to the end ; and doubtless about this very time, or perhaps a little earlier, might have attained his present eminence as the legitimate successor of a departed or disabled Conservative chief. But Peel died, just as the hearts of his old followers had begun to soften towards him, and the little band of new men that swore by him while all the rest stood aloof, felt themselves stranded. How they sulked and fretted, and "put themselves continually up to auction, and continually bought themselves in," it would be to repeat a tale thrice told if we referred to the circumstance here. Enough is done when we remind our readers that the party, originally small, dwindled away by degrees till it became a byword in the mouths of all men ; and would have disappeared entirely but for certain incidents which have operated more powerfully on the fate of the nation than their seeming importance, when first noticed, led the most careful observer to anticipate.

The Whigs had long made use of the Radicals to serve their own purposes. With them they worked to achieve ends peculiarly their

own, and all the recompense made for their services amounted to smooth words and a very cold shoulder. The Radicals bore this for a while, and then lost patience. The Whigs, on this, began to fear, and, as a necessary consequence, to hate, their recalcitrant allies.

The Radicals despised and abhorred the Whigs. Both detested the Tories, fearing nothing so much as their return to office. The Peelites took then an attitude of political independence, and became in consequence masters of the situation. Lord Aberdeen's Cabinet was more of a Peelite Cabinet than anything else, and Mr Gladstone became its moving spirit. There was little cordiality among the constituent elements in that heterogeneous body; yet the fact of sitting together in the same council-chamber tended to smooth down some asperities, and the adroit management of Lord Palmerston did all the rest. Winning the Peelites to himself, he separated them for ever from the Tories, and reduced them to choose at his death between pure Radicalism and subserviency to the Whigs. Mr Gladstone did not hesitate which line to take. He knew that, as a Whig, he would never reach the highest office in the State. One by one the principles of his earlier years had been departed from, and he stood prepared, while as yet only leader of the House of Commons, to throw over whatever remained. How he went to work, how ready he found Mr Bright and the extreme section of the Liberals to co-operate with him in undermining Lord Russell's influence, we need not stop to point out. The history of the last two or three years is charged with proofs of his treason as well to new alliances as to old. He is now First Lord of the Treasury, with the Tories in a small minority, with the Whigs utterly degraded, and the contemners of every other constitution than that of the United States of America pressing him

on along a road on which he did not enter at first without reluctance, but from which he can never more turn aside unless driven from it and from office at the same time. The conclusion, then, at which we arrive is this,—that from a very early date in his public career, beginning palpably at the period when he seceded from Sir Robert Peel's Administration, supporting, as an independent member, a measure against which, as a Minister, he had formerly spoken, Mr Gladstone set his heart on becoming what he now is, and, finding other avenues to the attainment of his end barred against him, he deliberately, and with exceeding skill, slid from extreme Toryism into the deepest depth of Radicalism. Consider his course of action during the last twenty years, and you will not fail to recognise the justice of this conclusion. He seizes every opportunity of getting ahead of the statesmen with whom he is associated in the Government. He coquets with Church questions so long as it is possible to retain his hold upon the representation of the University of Oxford, because that is to him an object of ambition second only to the Premiership. But losing that, he plunges boldly into extremes, and having Lord Russell as his chief, he enters into secret and confidential communication with Mr Bright. Last of all, presuming that nothing else will carry him free of Whig embarrassment, he contrives and executes that master-stroke of policy which reunites in its hour of greatest distress a broken Liberal party. He denounces the upstart of Protestant ascendancy in Ireland, heads a crusade for the overthrow of the Church in that portion of the kingdom, and, sustained by the whole might of Roman Catholics, political dissenters, men professing no creed, and London and other mobs, he carries Downing Street by assault, and reigns there as we are assured

supreme. Is his hold upon power as fixed as his flatterers in and out of the House of Commons affirm it to be? We doubt the fact, and for the following among other reasons:

The overthrow of the Protestant Church was to be a message of peace which the Irish people could not fail to understand. They were to learn from that act, and the determination with which it was carried through, that, come what might, a full measure of justice would henceforth be meted out to them in all respects. And the more to convince them of the goodwill of their rulers, a certain number of Fenian leaders, whom the preceding Government had brought to trial and convicted, received a free pardon and were set at liberty. Finally, the bill suspending the *Habeas Corpus* Act was not renewed, and Ireland enjoyed once more all the rights and privileges of the British Constitution.

The return expected for these concessions was—that disaffection to the Imperial Government should cease; that priests and peoples should combine to show themselves worthy of still further favours; and that, waiting patiently on the known goodwill of a strong Cabinet and a Liberal House of Commons, the country should find rest. What has been the result? Not within the memory of man has Ireland been in such a state of universal disquiet. The overthrow of the Church, while it infuriated the Protestants, was treated by Roman Catholics, both of the clergy and the laity, as an incident to be sneered at. What do the priests care for the confiscation of a property in the fragments of which they are not allowed to participate? What do the laity gain by the removal from among them of a body of men who, in very many instances, were the sole resident gentry throughout extensive and otherwise savage districts? The release of a few of the Fenian prisoners has served no other purpose than to stimulate a

demand for the release of all the rest, whom the people regard, not as guilty, nor even as deluded men, but as true patriots, martyrs in their country's cause. Mr Gladstone is assailed with remonstrances against the wrong done to these good men, and fierce demands for their deliverance. He replies meekly, declining, it is true, to obey the behests of the remonstrants, but discovering in the language of their appeals signs of loyalty and moderation which are quite invisible to all the world besides. Meanwhile monster meetings are held in town and country—green banners flutter in the breeze, and the harp without the crown becomes the emblem of nationality, and repeal of the Union is demanded. We say nothing of the extravagant pretensions put forth, first by tenants large and small, and, by-and-by, by day-labourers. Fixity of tenure, whatever the expression may mean, is in the mouth of every public speaker, the very owners of the soil not venturing to say or write a syllable in contravention of the absurdity.

Mr Gladstone may flatter himself into the persuasion that these things are comparatively little regarded in England. He may be so far deluded also as to believe that over the difficulties raised by them in Ireland the priests will carry him. We know the reverse. The election of a convicted Fenian to represent Tipperary, and the deep humiliation which was requisite to save Captain Greville Nugent from defeat in Longford, are pregnant with meaning. When the son of a peer, a gentleman of large possessions, is forced to declare himself at the hustings the mere creature of the Popish priests, it is time for Protestant England and Scotland to look about them. When the Government is assuring their adherents that one of their first great measures will be, after they have carried the reform of the laws affecting land in Ireland, to

bring in a bill for the education of the whole people on non-sectarian principles, it is no great token of their chances of carrying the priesthood along with them, that the latter demand the substitution for the present unsectarian national system in Ireland of one which shall throw the education of the people entirely into their hands. Again, this "elaborate bill for dealing with the land in Ireland," of what nature is it to be? Has Mr Bright inoculated his chief with his idea for purchasing and redistributing the estates of the Protestant gentry; or are all the landowners in the kingdom, whatever their religious persuasion may be, to surrender their property with or without compensation? As to leases, courts of arbitration, and so forth, we do not understand that any, except a few enthusiastic doctrinaires, believe in the possibility of such arrangements, or their utility, if created. The pleasant case between Sir John Young and the family of the deceased Presbyterian minister, is almost as rich a specimen of the Irish mode of looking at matters of this sort as the bolder proceedings of the maiden lady's tenant, who demurs to the decisions of his own referee, and insists upon holding his land on his own terms. Ireland! Ireland alone will break this wretched Government down, or we very much deceive ourselves. They talk of peace! They let slip the dogs of war. What was once the Established Church is falling to pieces, as we predicted that it would do. The clergy and the people agree only in this, their common indignation against the Government which has robbed them. The Presbyterians likewise are beginning to find out how grossly they were deceived and mocked to their own hurt. Among them, not less than among the Roman Catholics, the desirableness of separating from England altogether is spoken about.

Meanwhile murders grow more plentiful and bold from day to day. The police, baffled and powerless, will soon cease to be trustworthy. It is by the troops alone that Ireland is held. How long will the authors of all this confusion be sustained in power, either by the House of Commons or by their constituencies?

Again Mr Gladstone, not content to outrage and exasperate whole bodies of persons, has managed, in the administration of Irish affairs, to bring the Irish Government into contempt, and to do wrong to individuals. Was ever such conduct heard of before as that which had to do with the procession of the apprentice boys in Derry, and the dismissal of Mr Madden from the magistracy? The 'prentice boys were warned against holding their annual commemoration, and troops were poured into the city to prevent it. At the last hour a proclamation came out, assenting to all that the 'prentices had required; and not they alone, but the Fenians also, marched through the town with their bands and banners, while the Queen's troops stood idly looking on, with arms in their hands. After this, who can be expected to pay the smallest regard to the law, if only it run counter to his own humours? Meanwhile Mr Madden, a respectable and singularly quiet country gentleman, who never in his life attended a political gathering, nor took any public part in opposing the Ministry, is dismissed rudely from the commission of the peace, and deprived of his rank of deputy-lieutenant, for no other cause than that he declines to act as sheriff of a county under a Government which he cannot trust. Doubtless this case among others will be inquired into when Parliament meets, and the excuse set up will probably be, that the authorities mistook him for his brother. But what will the country say to a Government which is

capable of such a blunder, yet fails, when the mistake is discovered, to undo its own wrong?

It is not, however, Mr Gladstone's Irish policy alone that will show in a different light, when sifted, from that which his admirers of the press strive to throw over it. As we took occasion not long ago to point out, the condition of the working classes in England was never more deplorable than it is now. Everywhere in the rural districts, as well as in London and the great seats of industry, there is a universal cry that the people are starving. Men able and willing to work cannot find employment, while capital, though abundant, lies idle for lack of enterprises on which to use it. Let no one suppose that the cry for a system of reciprocity in dealing with foreign nations is one got up for a purpose, and therefore sure to die out. Rightly or wrongly the operatives are fast becoming imbued with the persuasion that their interests are sacrificed, in order that the rich may enjoy their luxuries at a cheap rate; and Mr Gladstone, who claims the credit of having been the main instrument of establishing Free-Trade in the country, may find, ere many weeks pass, that his popularity is on the wane. In like manner, the savings effected at the Admiralty and in the War Office seem to come exclusively out of the pockets of the poor. The shutting up of the Woolwich Dockyard, the discharge of workmen from those of Chatham, and Portsmouth, and Sheerness,—these things may be wise in themselves, but they are not calculated to make friends of the people who suffer from them. The money expended in carrying Mr Childers through his cruises, and repairing the damage done to the fleet in the course of them, would have kept some hundreds of labourers at work for weeks. As to the army reductions, these, as far as we are able to understand them, go to this—that every corps

in the service is to be reduced, so far as the non-commissioned officers and privates are concerned, to a skeleton, while the full complement of officers, by far the most expensive part of the machine, is to be kept up.

Nor are these the only moves in connection with both army and navy of which the tendency is as bad, as the proceedings themselves will startle even such as fail to see whither they are carrying us. The Horse Guards, it appears, like the Protestant Church in Ireland, must cease, as a national institution, to exist; and the Commander-in-Chief, transferred to the office in Pall Mall, will become a mere head of a department under the Secretary of State for War. Now this, if it come to pass, will be neither more nor less than the formal reversal of the decision at which the Parliaments which succeeded the great Civil War, one after another, arrived. The Commander-in-Chief, occupying a room in the War Office, and taking all his instructions from the Secretary of State, will cease to be what he has heretofore been—the medium of communication between the Queen and her army. All appointments will henceforth be in the hands of the Minister; all promotions settled according to his pleasure; and the army, which has heretofore been the army of the Crown, will become the army of the Parliament. Indeed, the change will go even farther than this: "The judgment of the House of Commons, we are assured, is on all matters of far greater weight than the judgment of the House of Lords." According to the will of the House of Commons the Secretary of State must therefore rise or fall; and so, by a very obvious process, the army becomes the servant neither of the Crown nor of Parliament, but of the House of Commons. Now, looking to the course into which public affairs are falling; considering the class which must hereafter exercise the greatest influence in

returning members to the House of Commons; accepting it as highly probable that we shall soon have manhood suffrage with the ballot—professedly to ward off, in point of fact to invite and aggravate, corruption,—who will any longer be able to rely upon the loyalty of the troops themselves in the event of a popular commotion being by any cause created? At this moment, indeed, the troops will do their duty, if any sad occasion should arise of using them to quell disturbances. But suppose the disturbance to be agreeable to the Minister—the Minister being the creature of the classes which nominate the House of Commons—what then? A democratic movement is got up. It has been declared at Birmingham and in Hyde Park that “the barbaric pomp of royalty” is out of date; or a popular Minister, say some President of the Board of Trade, has enunciated his determination to bring in a Land Bill for England and Scotland as well as for Ireland; or possibly the same or some other member of the Cabinet may proclaim that a House of Lords is worse than useless, and must be abolished: the sovereign, of course, in such a case as one or other of these, will at once dismiss her Ministers, and in the event of an attack upon life and property in the capital, will require her troops to act. But will this be possible? No. The Minister of War, who is now supreme, takes care to send every soldier out of London before the time comes for trying his own strength against the strength of the Crown. And the Commander-in-Chief, who, while yet representing the Crown, had it in his power to take the Queen’s pleasure, and withhold a dangerous order, as he has become nothing else than a clerk in the War Office, so he can neither originate nor prevent anything, except as his master shall require. Let us speak out frankly and openly upon so grave a question before it be settled.

The suppression of the office of Commander-in-Chief, and the absorption of all direct control over the army by a civilian Minister who holds office only at the pleasure of the House of Commons, will be the severest blow that has been struck at the monarchical principle in this country since the times of the Long Parliament. We cannot persuade ourselves that either House of Parliament is, as yet, ripe for so very serious an inroad on the Constitution. It is impossible to believe that the Crown will submit to be so degraded without appealing against its Ministers to the Legislature—and if the Legislature fail it, against the decision of the present House of Commons to the country.

Meanwhile the aspect of affairs, both as regards our relations with the United States and in reference to the feeling which has sprung up, and is continually becoming more bitter, in the colonies, presents little to assure Mr Gladstone of the continued support of the country. Lord Clarendon’s dissection of the bill of indictment brought against him by the new American minister is, indeed, perfect. Mr Motley has not a leg to stand upon, and he knows it. But, though the wolf had very little reason in the complaint which he brought against the lamb, he was but the more earnest in avenging an alleged wrong, because it had no existence. The insolent protest of the American Foreign Office partakes largely of the character which *Æsop* infused into the wolf’s complaint; and if common report is to be credited, it will be followed, if possible, by kindred results. The rebellion at the Red River Settlement, and the petition of the inhabitants of British Columbia to be annexed, are very significant facts. Mr Bright and Mr Gladstone, who equally abhor war, will, as a matter of course, let both of these colonies drift from us. They will say that the loss is a mere sentimental grievance; where-

as to retain them, money and life must be sacrificed largely. Be it so. But woe to the empire which begins to abandon its extremities rather than put the centre to inconvenience. Rome withered at the heart before her offshoots drifted off from her. The first colony that separates from us, like a feather thrown up into the air, will let the whole world see whither we are tending. If we surrender one, be it ever so worthless, on the demand of any other power, then the sooner we cease to sing "Rule, Britannia" the better. Now we do not believe that the people of England are as yet prepared for these things. It strikes us, on the contrary, that the vast importance of our transmarine territories is just beginning to be felt and acknowledged by the masses. These colonisation societies springing up everywhere, show that at length the suffering poor, and the rich who feel for them, understand how alone the ills of over-population are to be remedied. The suffering poor, therefore, and the rich who feel for them, cannot be expected to approve a policy which shall give an impulse to a movement so eminently calculated to rob them and their children of their inheritance. Mr Gladstone and Lord Granville may pretend to hold the remonstrances of colonial deputations light. We are mistaken if they will not find, when the season of difficulty arises to them, that colonists and the friends of colonists have more influence in Great Britain than they dreamed of.

And now, while all these clouds are gathering round them, we have not only the newspapers asseverating that a Liberal Government, with Mr Gladstone at its head, is a necessity, but we have Mr Bright upon the stump, gathering round him his friends in Birmingham, and speaking to them no more as the teacher of the people, but as the Minister of the Crown. Mr Bright's recent speeches have hardly, as it

seems to us, received full justice either from the 'Times' or the 'Standard.' The 'Times' undertakes, of course, to account favourably for his change of tone. He has been taught by experience. He knows now what the difficulties really are that stand in the way of the very best-intentioned Government. The 'Standard,' on the contrary, will not allow to the popular orator one iota of merit. It considers his first address, during his recent visit to Birmingham, to be as mischievous as any that he ever uttered; and of the others it speaks contemptuously. We have read all his appeals to his constituents and admirers differently. He is guarded rather in the language in which he clothes his thoughts than in the thoughts themselves. He has not changed a single opinion. But being a member of a Cabinet in which there are still those who differ from him on every subject, *toto cælo*, he avoids discussions on which he could not enter without bringing confusion into the Government. Mr Bright, in spite of his somewhat fulsome laudation of the individual sovereign, is precisely what he ever was—a democrat to the backbone. His hatred of the House of Lords he scarcely takes the trouble to disguise at Birmingham, any more than in the House of Commons. The landed gentry are odious in his eyes; and he tells his people that the great measure of last session has effected all that its authors intended it to effect, because he sees or imagines that its ultimate results will be the downfall of everything like monarchical institutions throughout the empire. What good can a gentleman of his peculiar views see in a regularly constituted Church, whether its organisation go up from the kirk-session to the General Assembly, or from the minister and his churchwardens to the Episcopate or the Papacy, to command respect? He has been trained from infancy

to treat religion as a sentiment, and the need of discipline in a Church, to be enforced by laws, and of officers especially appointed to explain and carry them into effect, as entirely out of place in the intercourse of men with their Creator. In his view, therefore, the severance of the Church from the State in Ireland is a step in the right direction. It has effected all that for the present he desired to gain from it. It has at least shaken men's belief in the moral obligation of the State to foster the religious principle in the people. Mr Bright has, we suspect, made a mistake in all this. It may go down in a hall crammed with Birmingham operatives, who take no trouble to analyse the declaration, and might not be able if they did to catch its true drift. But instructed Churchmen, whether they be Anglicans, Presbyterians, or Roman Catholics, are differently circumstanced. In their mutual dislike to each other, they may decline to look beyond the end immediately achieved; but they cannot, when they come to consider the matter, fail to perceive that there is a still sterner issue in the background. Again, Mr Bright deceives himself if he suppose for a moment that the nonsense which he talked on the subject of reciprocity will have any other effect than to confirm the advocates of that commercial system in their error, if an error it be. They will tell him, in reply, that they deprecate the imposition of duties on the raw material; that they would object to customs on the importation of cotton, as much as on the importation of corn and cattle; and are averse to tax the export of wool or grain. But if France persists in taxing our fabrics, then are we bound to defend ourselves by taxing hers; of which the effect will be, that whatever England is capable of producing, the English people will purchase at a moderate rate; while those who cannot do without foreign

fabrics, and are rich enough to buy them, can do so. As to the argument which turns upon increased house-rent, and so forth, there is no weight in it whatever. Rents were not what they are now, while as yet only native masons, bricklayers, and carpenters, built the houses. They will scarcely rise above their present level if we revert to this same good custom; and should they rise, men in constant employ will be better able to pay six or seven shillings a-week for their rooms, than men out of work entirely, or only employed by fits and starts, are able to pay five shillings.

On the whole, then, it appears to us, that the coming session is just as likely to shake, weaken, and destroy the present Government as to insure to it a long lease of power. Ireland is in a state of volcano. No land law that the heart of man can devise will be sufficient to change its condition in that respect. The priests insist upon such a fixity of tenure for the tenants as is clearly incompatible with the rights of property in the nominal landowner. The working men demand that they shall not be forgotten, and seem to point to a recurrence to the old tribal system. Can we imagine for a moment that a British Parliament will sanction either wrong, or anything at all approaching to it? The priests demand that they shall become the sole recognised instructors of the Irish people. Will either the Manchester Education League, or the Education Union of England, or the National Society, or the General Assembly of Scotland, assent to this? The Irish people—for we grieve to say that recent events have tended to bring more than Fenians to this state of mind—are becoming more and more convinced every day that Ireland will never prosper till she re-establish a Legislature of her own. Is it to be credited that Parliament will sanction the setting up two governing bodies within the same monarchy, and that,

too, after the experience of seventy years of union? Meanwhile the colonists claim to have their views represented by a delegation in London of their own body. What is this except a Colonial Parliament, if not possessing powers co-extensive with that which sits in Westminster, at all events qualified and authorised to advise, and it may be restrain, that body? And for rousing the spirit which thus works, Mr Gladstone knows that he alone is responsible. Well, we are in God's hands. If it be His will to destroy this great constitutional

monarchy we cannot help it. But we venture to hope better things, even though the realisation of the dream in which we indulge may imply the expulsion from office of our "inevitable Prime Minister." Let us wait and see whether self-denial, regard for truth, wisdom, and a genuine love of country may not co-operate to bring men of moderate opinions together, to the discomfiture and rout of those who seem bent on sacrificing all that is worth living for both in England and Ireland to their own wild ambition.

UPON THE EMPLOYMENT OF RHYMED VERSE IN ENGLISH COMEDY.

TO THE EDITOR OF 'BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.'

TORQUAY, Jan. 20, 1870.

SIR,—In his Preface to the comedy of the 'PLAIDEURS,' Racine observes that "people in general pay no heed to the intention or the diligence of authors," and complains "that the work he had written for amusement had been examined as if it were a tragedy; so that even those most inclined to be diverted were afraid *de n'avoir pas ri dans les regles*." Alas! I have not written the 'PLAIDEURS;' but, judging by certain comments on the little comedy I have written, I feel that I ought so far to have imitated the illustrious author of the 'PLAIDEURS,' as to have explained the nature of my design in a preface. If you can courteously spare me a brief space in your columns, I would fain repair that omission.

However trivial my work in itself, the inquiries it suggests can scarcely be without interest and importance to genuine students of our literature—viz., 1st, Whether our language will admit of a versified rhythm especially appropriate to the Comic Muse? and 2dly, If so, whether such rhythm should be sought in the metre employed by Molière? Many years ago, when I was encouraged to direct my thoughts towards compositions intended for stage representation, conversing with some not undistinguished literary friends, the remark was made, that our comedy, so rich in its department of prose, had hitherto found no measure in verse readily available for the mirth or the satire in which the poetry of comedy mainly consists; that our blank verse, the noblest of all forms for tragic diction, and lending poetic elevation or grace to the mixed drama of sentiment and romance, is singularly ill adapted to the playfulness of comic dialogue. It is truly said by the critic to whom I am indebted for a too flattering review of 'Walpole' in the last number of your Magazine: "That Shakespeare judged blank verse an inappropriate vehicle for comedy, is shown by the fact that his comic business is almost invariably transacted in prose, that most of his comic characters never speak verse at all, and that others, who do speak it, descend to prose in comic scenes." Yet if we are to boast of a Comic Muse, it would seem that she ought to have some sort of poetic measure which she would not be called upon to forsake the moment she entered her rightful province of humour and wit. The comedy of the ancients is a comedy of verse. In the course of the above-mentioned discussion, reference was naturally made to Molière, and to the advantage for the surprise of repartee and the point of epigram which his employment of rhyme had bestowed on his dialogue. The question then no less naturally arose, Whether the metre employed by Molière was not of all measures the best adapted to comic poetry? and some amongst us contended that English prosody was even better adapted than French to the colloquial usages of the twelve-foot couplet—admitting of easier anapæstic flow, and greater variety of cæsura and cadence. The very objections urged against the employment of such metre in tragic dialogue seemed to us arguments in favour of its application to comic. The Englishman or the German most hostile to the rhyme of Corneille would often be the first to acknowledge the merits of rhyme in Molière. The result of our discussion was a general agreement that the experiment of such a metrical form for comic expression would be well worth trying, and if only partially successful in the first instance, might hereafter be taken up and improved by some great

comic poet, and furnish in his hands no mean additional ornament to our dramatic literature.

It however seemed to us all that certain conditions for the introduction of the rhymed measure into English comic dialogue were indispensable—Firstly, That it should not be employed in a comedy intended to depict the special manners and humours of our own day. It is a just rule in criticism that when a dramatic author would avail himself of vehicles of expression foreign to our colloquial usages, he should withdraw our attention from our daily associations, and trust to that wonderful ductility with which the imagination lends itself to unfamiliar forms provided they be not forcibly contrasted by familiar terms and surroundings; and we pretty generally agreed that the age of Pope and Swift, the age *par excellence* of English satirists, furnishes perhaps the most favourable period in which a satirical comedy in rhyme may seek its characters and hazard the novelty of its form. Secondly, We concurred in the principle that the *dramatis personæ* invented should seek to illustrate those general types of comedy which are not confined to one nation or to one time; poetic forms being best adapted to those broad and lasting distinctions which are called typical—such as Molière borrows from the Latin comedians as they borrowed from the Greek—while prose is the fitter mode of expression (and so in his prose comedies Molière appeared to deem) for those individual eccentricities and humours which cannot be fairly classed under the head of cosmopolitan types, but belong to the manners of a peculiar date or locality. Verse, for instance, would be sadly misapplied in conveying literally the sort of drollery which belongs to the dialect of a Yorkshire countryman or the slang of a London cockney. In the first case, comedy is extracted from generals which are nearly always typical, and best expressed by the poetry which constitutes the common language of human nature; in the last, it is extracted from particulars which are special and individualised, and to whose peculiarities prose best gives the partial and fleeting realism that confines itself to the manners of the day. I need not enlarge on this distinction—it is familiar to every man acquainted with the rudiments of criticism.

Well then, sir, out of this conversation, at the remote date of which I speak, grew the germ of this little comedy of 'Walpole.' At that time, wishing to see if I could hit off some slight outline of the results at which I and others, far better critics of dramatic art than I pretend to be, had arrived, should the experiment of rhymed comedy be adventured—the scene between Walpole and Blount as it stands in my play, Act ii. Scene ii., was written. It was approved by the friends I have referred to as conformable, so far as it went, and however inadequately, to the conditions of art in which we had all concurred. I then received urgent solicitations to extend the scene to a drama to be placed on the stage. Various circumstances, however, combined to withdraw my attention altogether from such an experiment, until last year, having some leisure on my hands, and reconsidering the collateral and prospective interests in comic art which were suggested by the inquiries with which I have commenced this intrusion on your pages,—viz., whether the English language can admit to the Comic Muse a Muse-like measure distinct from prose on the one hand, and tragic rhythm on the other—in a word, peculiar to herself—and whether, if so, she can find any measure so good as that in which the verse of Molière has rendered the verse of Plautus and Terence,—I resolved to finish a work which, though so slight in itself, I cannot allow to be undeserving of fair examination as to the principles it embodies and the hints it may suggest.

Poetic rhythm, whether it be rhymed or unrhymed, necessitates stretch of intellect in the writer. Even in the gayer forms of comedy, it necessitates the terseness which comes from thoughtful labour. Compare the prose comedy of Molière to the poetic, and what man capable of literary judgment will not acknowledge the infinite superiority which the obligations of versified rhythm confer on the poetic comedy over the prose, when composed by the same author, not only in epigrammatic expression, but in succinctness of plot, in liveliness of character, in playfulness of satire, in elevation of sentiment? It is quite true that the introduction of rhyme into our comedy is an innovation. But innovation is originality, and originality does not necessarily imply a defect in art.

There was a time, not very long before that of Shakespeare, when blank verse was an innovation, and had that Stranger from abroad been at once denounced as at variance with preconceived associations of English rhythm, who shall say whether the tragedies of Shakespeare (if discarding the rhyme of the *Mysteries*), would not have been written in prose?

I must hasten to a conclusion. I hold that everything in literature should endeavour to be that which it pretends to be—that a thing which calls itself an oration should not be an essay; that a thing which calls itself a novel should not be a sermon; and therefore, in writing the thing which calls itself a comedy, I have endeavoured, quite apart from the artistic question whether it should or should not be written in verse, to consult the laws of comic construction in plot, situation, and effect.

If I decline to place on the stage a comedy thus composed for representation, the reason is sufficiently obvious. Every habitual playgoer knows that the immediate fate of a play on the boards depends much more on the actors than it does on the author.

I am assured by friends much better acquainted than myself with the practical state and condition of our stage, that, however justly admired our living actors may be in parts to which they are accustomed, yet that which is technically called *Dressed Comedy* has become too obsolete for their study, and that it would be scarcely possible to find in any single theatre three performers to whose talents the principal parts in *Walpole* would be congenial or suited. The objection against performing a play which can find no appropriate performers would apply to my piece, whether written in prose or verse; but of course it applies with additional force where there is an imperative necessity for that niceness of expression which all rhythmical forms demand.

In consistency with my faith in the soundness of my experiment, I do but follow the example of all prudent experimentalists in declining to accept conditions for trying it glaringly hostile to all fairness of test.

I am obliged, therefore, for the present, to leave this work to be considered by readers merely as a comic poem, of a kind in which there is no previous example in the English language, but serving, despite all that may be said in depreciation of the first experimentalist, to direct the minds of those who come after him to a field capable of affording no inadequate returns to the pains bestowed upon its culture.

THE AUTHOR OF 'WALPOLE'

POSTSCRIPT TO "LORD BYRON AND HIS CALUMNIATORS."

SINCE the publication of our January number Mrs Stowe's long-promised volume has made its appearance. Those who expected that it would contain any further evidence as to the charge brought against Lord Byron and his sister will be disappointed. We have perused it carefully, and not one particle is to be found. On the contrary, Mrs Stowe appears to glory in the infantine faith with which she received Lady Byron's astounding assertions. "*Of course,*" she says, "*I did not listen to this story as one who was investigating its worth. I received it as truth.*" "The whole consultation was upon the assumption that she had at her command such proofs as could not be questioned" (p. 166).

What these proofs were Mrs Stowe never inquired either during Lady Byron's life or since her death; and she, with much *naïveté*, expresses her surprise at finding that any of Lady Byron's "friends, trustees, and family" are alive, and her "astonishment at hearing that her papers are in their hands" (p. 127). Can language be strong enough to express the reprobation which must be felt by every one who has one particle of honesty, truth, or charity in his nature, for a woman who could publish so horrible and revolting a story on such a foundation? The blind devotion of Mrs Stowe for her idol appears to make her incapable of seeing the atrocity of the charge she has brought against Mrs Leigh. She says, apologetically, "Lord Byron, if we look at it rightly, did not corrupt Mrs Leigh more than he did the whole *British public*!" (p. 222.) Shades of our grandmothers and great aunts! were ye all Myrrhas, Tamars, and daughters of Lot? Is this the conception entertained on the other side of the Atlantic as to English

society, or is it mere midsummer madness? Mrs Stowe does not dispute the genuineness of Lady Byron's letters to Mrs Leigh published in the 'Quarterly,' but accounts for them by the superhuman charity of the writer which enabled her not only to leave her husband and his sister to indulge their criminal inclinations in the drawing-room undisturbed by her presence (p. 159) whilst she offered up prayers on their behalf in her bedroom, but after receiving his repeated bold avowal that the connection had existed in time past, that it should continue in time to come, and that she must submit to it (p. 159, 160)—these are the very words of Mrs Stowe—to regard the partner of his crime as "her confidante and friend," and "as a most abused and innocent woman" (p. 195). Such charity is certainly supernatural, and we can only account for Mrs Stowe's belief in its existence on the supposition that she holds the doctrine of "*credo quia impossibile.*"

Much of Mrs Stowe's book is devoted to a eulogy of Truth which forcibly reminds us of Mr Chadband's discourse in 'Bleak House' on the same subject, delivered over the unhappy "Tom All-alone." But when Mrs Stowe has occasion to practise the virtue she commends, there is a sad shortcoming. We will give one instance. At p. 37 Mrs Stowe quotes the testimony of a Mrs Mimms, whom she describes as "the confidential waiting-maid who went with Lady Byron on her wedding-journey, . . . a venerable, respectable old person, quite in possession of all her senses in general, and of that sixth sense of propriety in particular, which appears not to be a common virtue in our days." Mrs Stowe then proceeds in the following words:—"As her testimony is important,

we insert it here, with a description of her person in full," p. 37. After this exordium, what does the reader suppose that Mrs Stowe does? She carefully omits from Mrs Mimms's narrative the following passage:—"She was present when they (Lord and Lady Byron) arrived at that mansion (Halnaby Hall) later on in the day, and saw them alight from the carriage. What was the condition of Lady Byron at that moment? Mrs Mimms says she was buoyant and cheerful as a bride should be, and kindly and gaily responded to the greetings of welcome which poured upon her from the pretty numerous group of servants and tenants of the Milbanke family who had assembled about the entrance to the mansion. Fletcher, who was the only servant who accompanied the bride and bridegroom from Seaham to Halnaby, and who of course sat upon the box, informed Mrs Mimms that a similar scene had occurred at Darlington at the hotel when they changed horses." No doubt Mrs Stowe did not expect that any one would take the trouble to look up the file of the 'Newcastle Chronicle' in which Mrs Mimms's narrative originally appeared, and thought that this scandalous *suppressio veri* would escape detection. And why did she make it? Simply because this passage conclusively disposes of the absurd slanders of Miss Martineau as to what occurred on that occasion, repeated by Mrs Stowe at page 287 of the present volume! "Oh, my friends!" (to quote from the well-known discussion before alluded to) "when that hardened heathen

told us a story of a cock and of a bull and of a lady, was that the *Terevth*? No, my friends, no!"

The rest of Mrs Stowe's volume is devoted to the bitterest vituperation of Lord Byron,—

"His father, mother, body, soul, and muse;"

of English society in general; of ourselves in particular (especially of the characters who appear in the 'Noctes,' and the writer of the article on the Countess Guiccioli's book in our July number last year); and of all who do not accept Lady Byron as a divinity to be worshipped with blind devotion, and Mrs Stowe as her propheteas.

We must in justice say that Mrs Stowe gives evidence of her sincerity by the powerful appeal which she makes to those who have the custody of Lady Byron's papers for their publication. In this we heartily concur. We know *ex certissima scientiâ* that there is in existence a mass of the most valuable correspondence, the publication of which is the only compensation which can now be made for the destruction of Lord Byron's memoirs. We say with equal confidence that such a publication would prove conclusively the justice of Lord Broughton's estimate of the character of Lord Byron,* and the utter impossibility of there being the slightest foundation for Mrs Stowe's horrible story; and we believe that those who have the papers alluded to in their possession are only restrained from making them public by a feeling of forbearance towards the memory of Lady Byron.

* 'Remarks on the Exclusion of Lord Byron's Monument from Westminster Abbey.'

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CONTENTS.

JOHN.—PART V.,	269
MISS AUSTEN AND MISS MITFORD,	290
THE ANTAGONISM OF RACE AND COLOUR; OR, WHITE, RED, BLACK, AND YELLOW IN AMERICA,	314
EARL'S DENE.—PART V.,	331
THE OPENING OF THE SUEZ CANAL.—PART III.,	356
IN FEBRUARY,	376
CORNELIUS O'DOWD—	379
RECONSTRUCTING THE EDIFICE.	
THE PASSION-PLAY IN THE HIGHLANDS OF BAVARIA,	381

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JOHN.—PART V.

CHAPTER XIV.

MR CREDITON'S bank was in the High Street of Camelford—a low-roofed, rather shabby-looking office, with dingy old desks and counters, at which the clerks sat about in corners, all visible to the public, and liable to constant distraction. The windows were never cleaned, on principle, and there were some iron bars across the lower half of them. Mr Crediton's own room was inside—you had to pass through the office to reach it; and the banker, when he chose to open his door, was visible to the clerks and the public at the end of the dingy vista, just as the clerks, and the public entering at the swing-door, and sometimes the street outside, were to him. The office was a kind of lean-to to the house, which was much loftier, more imposing, and stately; and Mr Crediton's room communicated with his dwelling by a dark passage. The whole edifice was red brick, and recalled the age of the early Georges, or even of their predecessor Anne—a time when men were not ashamed of their business, but at the same time did it unpre-

tendingly, and had no need during office hours of gilding or plate-glass. The house had a flight of steps up to it almost as high as the top of the office windows, and a big iron horn to extinguish links, and other traces of a moderate antiquity. Up to these steps Kate Crediton's horse would be led day after day, or her carriage draw up, in very sight of the clerks behind their murky windows. They kept their noses over their desks all day, in order that a butterfly creature, in all the brilliant colours of her kind, should flutter out and in in the sunshine, and take her pleasure. That was perhaps what some of them thought. But, to tell the truth, I don't believe many of them thought so. Even Mr Whichelo, the head clerk, whose children were often ailing, and who had a good deal of trouble to make both ends meet, smiled benign upon Kate. Had she been her own mother, it might have been different; but she was a creature of nineteen, and everybody felt it was natural. The clerks, with their noses at the

grindstone, and her father sombre in the dingy room, working hard too in his way—all to keep up the high-stepping horses, the shining harness, the silks and velvets, and the high supremacy of that thing like a rosebud who sat princess among them,—after all, was it not quite natural? What is the good of the stem but to carry, and of the leaves and thorns but to protect, the flower?

But it may be supposed that John Mitford's feelings would be of a very strange description when he found himself dropped down in Mr Crediton's office, as if he had dropped from the skies. He was the junior clerk, and did not know the business, and his perch was behind backs, not far from one of the windows from which he could see all Kate's exits and entrances. He saw the public, too, coming and going, the swing-door flashing back and forward all day long, and on Saturdays and market-days caught sometimes the wondering glances of country folks who knew him. He sat like a man in a dream, while all these things went on around him. How his life had changed! What had brought him here? What was to come of it? were questions which glided dreamily through John's brain from time to time, but he could give no answer to them. He was here instead of at Fanshawe Regis; instead of serving the world and his generation, as he had expected to do, he was junior clerk in a banker's office, entering dreary lines of figures into dreary columns. How had it all come about? John was stupefied by the fall and by the surprise, and all the overwhelming dreary novelty; and accordingly he sat the day through at first, and did what he was told to do with a certain apathy beyond power of thinking; but that was a state of mind, of course, which could not last for ever. Yet even when that apathy was broken, the feeling of surprise continued to surmount all

other feelings. He had taken this strange step, as he supposed, by his own will; nobody had forced or even persuaded him. It was his own voluntary doing; and yet how was it? This question floated constantly, without any power on his part to answer it, about his uneasy brain.

He was close to Kate, sitting writing all day long under a roof adjoining the very roof that sheltered her, with herself before his eyes every day. For he could not help but see her as she went out and in. But still it was doubtful whether there was much comfort in those glimpses of her. Mr Crediton had not been unkind to him; but he had never pretended, of course, to be deeply delighted with the unexpected choice which his daughter had made. "If I consent to Kate's engagement with you," he had said, "it must be upon my own conditions. It is likely to be a long time before you can marry, and I cannot have a perpetual philandering going on before my eyes. She might like it, perhaps, for that is just one of the points upon which girls have no feeling; but you may depend upon it, it would be very bad for you, and I should not submit to it for a moment. I don't mean to say that you are not to see her, but it must be only at stipulated times. Thus far, at least, I must have my own way." John had acquiesced in this arrangement without much resistance. It had seemed to him reasonable, comprehensible. Perpetual philandering certainly would not do. He had to work—to acquire a new trade foreign to all his previous thoughts and education—to put himself in the way of making money and providing for his wife; and he too could see as well as her father that to be following her about everywhere, and interrupting the common business of life by idle love-making, however beatific it might be, was simply impossible. To be able

to look forward now and then to the delight of her presence—to make milestones upon his way of the times in which he should be permitted to see her, and sun himself in her eyes,—with that solace by the way, John thought the time would pass as the time passed to Jacob—as one day; and he accordingly assented, almost without reluctance.

But he did not know when he consented thus to the father's conditions that Kate would be flashing before him constantly under an aspect so different from that in which he had known her. Her engagement, though it made such an overwhelming difference to him, made little difference to Kate. She had come home to resume her usual life—a life not like anything that was familiar to him. Poor John had never known much about young ladies. He had never become practically aware of the place which amusement holds in such conditions of existence—how, in fact, it becomes the framework of life round which graver matters gather and entwine themselves; and it was a long time before he fully made the discovery, if, indeed, he did ever make it. Society could scarcely be said to exist in Fanshawe Regis; and those perpetual ridings and drivings and expeditions here and there—those dinners and dances—those afternoon assemblages—the music and the chatter, the *va et vient*, the continual flutter and movement, confounded the young man. He tried to be glad at first that she had so much gaiety, and felt very sorry for himself, who was shut out from all share in it. And then he got a little puzzled and perplexed. Did this sort of thing go on for ever? Was there never to be any break in it? Kate herself unconsciously unfolded to him its perennial character without the remotest idea of the amazement she was exciting in his mind. So far as John's experience went, a dance, or even a dinner-party, or a croquet-

party, or a picnic, were periodical delights which came at long intervals, but they were the common occupations of life to Kate. He felt that he could have lived and worked like Jacob for twice seven years, had his love been living such a life as Rachel did by his side—going out with the flocks, tending the lambs, drawing water at the fountain, smiling shy and sweet at him from the tent-door. These were the terms in which his imagination put it. Had he seen Kate trip by the window as his mother did with her little basket, or trip back again with a book, after his own ideal of existence, his heart would have blessed her as she passed, and he himself would have returned to his ledger and worked twice as hard, and learned his duties twice as quickly; but to see her flash away from the door amid a cavalcade of unknown riders—to see her put into her carriage by some man whom he longed to kick on the spot—to watch her out of sight going into scenes where his imagination could not follow her, was very hard upon John. And thus to see her every day, and yet never, except once a-week or so, exchange words with her! Against his will, and in spite of all his exertions, this sense of her continual presence, and of her unknown friends, and life which was so close to him, and yet so far from him, absorbed his mind. When he should have been working his office work he was thinking where could she have gone to-day? When he ought to have been awakening to the interests of the bank, he was brooding with a certain sulkiness quite unnatural to him over the question, who that man could be who put her on her horse? It is impossible to describe how all this hindered and hampered him, and what a chaos it made of his life.

And even Kate herself found it very different from what she had anticipated. She sent in a servant for him several times at first; and

once, when she had some little errand in the town, had the audacity to walk into the bank in her proper person and call her lover from his desk. "Please tell Mr Mitford I want him," she said, looking Mr Whichelo full in the face, with an angelical blush and smile; and when he came to her, Kate turned to him before all the clerks, who were watching with a curiosity which may be imagined. "Oh John," she said, "come with me as far as Paterson's. It is market-day, and I don't like to walk alone." Of course he went, though he had his work to do. Of course he would have gone whatever had been the penalty. The penalty was that Mr Crediton gave Kate what she called "a dreadful scold." "It was like a fishwoman, you know," she confided to John afterwards. "I could not have believed it of papa; but I suppose when people are in a passion they are all alike, and don't mind what they say."

"It is because he grudges you to me," said poor John, with a sigh, "and I don't much wonder;" upon which Kate clasped her two pretty hands on his arm, and beguiled him out of all his troubles. This was on one of the Sunday evenings which it was his privilege to spend with her. Mr Crediton was old-fashioned, and saw no company on Sundays, and that was the day on which John was free to come to spend as much of it as he pleased with his betrothed. At first he had begun by going to luncheon, and remaining the whole afternoon in her company; but very soon it came to be the evening only which was given up to him. Either it was that Mr Crediton made himself disagreeable at luncheon, or that he thrust engagements upon Kate, reminding her that she had promised to read to him, or copy letters for him, or some altogether unimportant matter. Mr Crediton, though he was so much the best off of the party that he had thus the means of avenging himself, was

not without grievances too; indeed, had he been consulted, he would probably have declared himself the person most aggrieved. His only child was about to be taken from him, and her society was already claimed by this nameless young man, without any particular recommendation, whom in her caprice she preferred. The Sunday afternoons had been the banker's favourite moment; he had nothing to do, and his doors were shut against society, and his child was always with him. No wonder that he used all the means in his power to drive back the enemy from that sacred spot.

And Mr Crediton had means in his power,—unlike Mrs Mitford, who sat, more alone than he, by her bedroom window all the hours when she was not at church, and wiped noiselessly again and again the tears out of her eyes. John's mother suffered more from this dreary change than words could say. She had not the heart to sit down-stairs except when it was necessary for that outline of family life consisting of prayers and meals, which, to Dr Mitford's mind, filled up all possible requirements. Mrs Mitford did not tell her husband nor any one what she was thinking. There seemed no longer any one left in the world who cared to know. And she could not punish Kate as Mr Crediton could punish John. Probably she would not have done it if she could, for to punish Kate would have been to punish him too; but oh, she sometimes thought to herself, if her horse had only run away with her before somebody else's door, this might never have been!

Thus it will be seen that this pretty young lady and that first caprice for the subjugation of John which came into her mind before she had seen him, in the leisure of her convalescence, had affected the friends of both in anything but a happy way. Indeed nobody except perhaps Kate herself got any good out

of the new bond. To her, who at the present moment was not called upon to make any sacrifice or give up anything, the possession of John, as of some one to fall back upon, was pleasant enough. She had all her usual delights and pleasures, lived as she had always lived, amused herself as of old, was the envy of her companions, the ringleader in all their amusements, the banker's only, much-indulged, fortunate child; and at the same time she had John to worship her on those Sunday evenings which once had been rather dull for Kate. When Mr Crediton dozed, as he sometimes did after dinner, or when he was busy with the little private pieces of business he used to give himself up to on Sunday evenings, there was her lover ready to bow down before her. It was the cream and crown of all her many enjoyments. Everybody admired, petted, praised, and was good to Kate, and John adored her. She looked forward to her Sunday ramble round the old-fashioned garden, sometimes in the dark, sometimes in the moonlight, with an exquisite sense of something awaiting her there which had a more subtle, penetrating, delicious sweetness than all the other sweets surrounding her. And she felt that he was happy too as soon as she had placed her little hand on his arm—and forgot that there was anything in his lot which could make him feel that he had bought his happiness dearly. Kate was young, and knew nothing about life, and therefore was unconsciously selfish. She was happy, without any drawback to her happiness; and so, naturally and as a matter of course, she took him to be, forgetting that he had purchased that hour on the Sunday evenings by the sacrifice of all the prejudices and all the habits and prospects and occupations of his life. This unconsciousness was one from which she might awaken any day. A chance word might open her eyes to it, and show her, to her own

disgust and confusion, the immense price he was paying for so transitory a delight; but at present nothing had awakened such a thought in her mind, and she was the one happy among the five most intimately concerned. Next after Kate in contentment with the new state of affairs was Dr Mitford, who saw a prospect of a very satisfactory "settlement in life" for his son, though he did not feel any very great satisfaction in the preliminaries. It was a pain to him, though a mild one, that John had abandoned the Church and become a clerk in a banker's office. It was a pain, and a little humiliation too, for everybody in Fanshawe Regis, and even the neighbouring clergymen, shook their heads and were very sorry to hear it, and wounded Dr Mitford's pride. But, after all, that was a trifling drawback in comparison with the substantial advantage of marrying so much money as was represented by Kate Crediton. "And fond of her too," he would say to himself in his study when he paused in one of his articles and thought it over. But yet the articles were interrupted by thinking it over as they had never been used to be. It gave him a passing twinge now and then, but it was he who suffered the least after Kate.

As for Mr Crediton, there was a certain sullen wrath in his mind which he seldom suffered to have expression, yet which plagued him like a hidden wound. To think that for this lout, this country lad, his child should, as it were, have jilted him, made light of all his wishes, shown a desire to separate herself from him and the life which he had fenced round from every care, and made delightful with every indulgence that heart could desire. He had gone out of his way to contrive pleasures for her, and to surround her with everything that was brilliant and fair like herself. She was more like a princess than a banker's daughter, thanks to his

unchanging, unremitting thoughtfulness; and this was how she had rewarded him the very first opportunity she had. Mr Crediton was very sore and wroth, as fathers are sometimes. Mothers are miserable and lonely and jealous often enough, heaven knows! but the fathers are wroth with that inextinguishable wonder—how the love-making of some trumpety young man should, in a day or two or a week or two, obliterate their deeper love and all the bonds of nature—which lies as deep in the heart as does the young impulse which calls it forth. Mr Crediton was angry, not so much, except at moments, with Kate, as with the world, and nature, and things in general—and John. He could not cross or thwart his child, but he would have been glad in his heart if something had happened to the man whom his child loved. Such sentiments are wicked, and they are very inconsistent—but they exist everywhere, and it would be futile to deny them; and the consequence was, that Mr Crediton was much less happy after his daughter's engagement, and put up with it by an effort; and, while John had his moment of delight on those Sunday evenings, was, for his part, anything but delighted. It even made him less good a man. He sat and fretted by himself, and found it very difficult to occupy his mind with any other subject. It vexed him to think of his Kate thus hanging on a stranger's arm. Of course he had always known that she must marry some time, but he had thought little of it as an approaching calamity; and then it had appeared certain that there would be a blaze of external advantage, and perhaps splendour, in any match Kate could make, which perhaps, prospectively at least, would lessen the blow. If it had exalted her into the higher circles of the social paradise, he felt as if the deprivation to himself would have been less great. But here

there was nothing to make amends—no salve to his wounded tenderness. Poor John! Mr Crediton had the justice now and then to feel that John was paying a hard price for his felicity. "Serve the fellow right," he said, and almost hated him; and pondered, with a *sour* sense of cruelty and wrong-doing, how he might be got rid of and removed out of the way.

As for Mrs Mitford she was simply unhappy, without hoping to mend matters, or thinking any more than she could help about the cause. She had lost her boy. To be sure it is what most mothers have to look forward to; but she, up to the very last, had been flattering herself that she should not be as most mothers. All had been so carefully devised to keep him at home, to secure to him the life which, in her soul, she believed to be the one which would suit him best. The change was so sudden and so great, that it stupefied her at first. She had to prepare him for going away, him whom all his life she had been preparing to stay in his natural home, to repeat and improve his father's life, to carry out and develop her own; she had to make up her mind to live altogether without him, she who had expected not only his society to make her happy, but his aid to make something of her work. It was she who had been for all these years the real spiritual head of Fanshawe Regis. Dr Mitford had done the "duty," and had preached the sermons, but every practical good influence, every attempt to mend the rustic parish, to curb its characteristic vices, or develop its better qualities, had come from his wife. And she had laboured on for years past, with the conviction that her son would perfect everything she began; that he would bring greater knowledge to it, and a more perfectly trained mind, and all the superior understanding which such humble women hold to be natural to a man. When she had to give

up this hope, it seemed to her at first as though the world had come to an end. What was the use of doing anything more, of carrying on the plans which must now die with her? The next new curate would probably care nothing about her schemes, and even might set himself to thwart her, as new curates sometimes do when a clergywoman is too active in a parish. And she was sick of the world and everything in it. The monotony of her life, from which all the colour seemed to have died out in a moment, suddenly became apparent to her, and all the failures, and obstructions, and hindrances which met her at every side. What could she do, a weak woman, she said to herself, against all the powers of darkness as embodied in Fanshawe Regis? Would it not be best to resign the unprofitable warfare and sink back into quiet, and shut out the mocking light? Wherever she went the people asked her questions about Mr John. Was he not to be a clergyman after all? Was it along o' his lass that wouldn't let him do as he wished? What was it? Mrs Mitford came home with her heart wearied by such inquiries, and sick with disappointment and misery. And she would go up to the room in which he was born, and cry, and say to herself that she never never could encounter such inquiries again. And oh, how dreary it was sitting down-stairs for the few moments which necessity and Dr Mitford required, in those summer nights when the moths were flying by scores in at the open window, and dimness reigned in all the corners, and the lamp shone steady and clear on the table! In all the obscurity round her, her son was not lurking. He was not ready to step in by the open window as he had done so often. He was with Kate Crediton, giving up his whole heart and soul to her; and his father and mother rang for the ser-

vants, and had prayers, as though they had never had any children. What a change, what a change it was! Mrs Mitford knew that it was impossible to thwart providence, let its plans be ever so unsatisfactory; but oh, she said to herself, why did not Kate's accident happen close to the Huntleys, or to any house but hers? Other boys were not so romantic, not so tender-hearted; and other mothers had heaps of children, and could not brood over the fortunes of every individual among them, as Mrs Mitford, with an ache of helpless anger at herself, knew that she brooded over John's. But all was in vain. She could not mend matters now. She could not mend her own bleeding, aching heart. And after all it was best to go back to her work, whatever might come of it, and do her best. She could bear anything, she thought, but those Sunday nights—moments which had once been so sweet, and were now so solitary. She said not a word to any one, and tried hard to keep herself from thinking; and she wrote kind, cheerful little letters to her boy, who, for his part, was so very good in writing regularly—so unlike most young men, as she told the people. But after she had finished those cheery, pleasant, gossiping letters, with all the news of the parish in them, Mrs Mitford would sit down and have a good cry. Oh what a change there was! how silent the house was, how ghostly the garden where she was always thinking she heard his step! The servants came in and went out again, and the father and the mother would sit together softly without a word, as if they had no child. Thus it will be seen that, of all concerned, it was Mrs Mitford who suffered most; but that none were satisfied, or felt the slightest approach of anything like happiness in the new state of affairs, unless, indeed, it might be Kate.

CHAPTER XV.

There is nothing so hard in human experience as to fit in the exceptional moments of life into their place, and bring them into a certain harmony with that which surrounds them; and in youth it is very hard to understand how it is that the exceptional can come only in moments. When the superlative either of misery or happiness arrives, there is nothing so difficult to an imaginative mind as to descend from that altitude and allow that the commonplace must return, and the ordinary resume its sway. And perhaps, more than any other crisis, the crisis of youthful passion and romance is the one which it is most difficult to come down from. It has wound up the young soul to an exaltation which has scarcely any parallel in life; even to the least visionary, the event which has happened—the union which has taken place between one heart and another—the sentiment which has concentrated all beauty and loveliness and desirableness in one being, and made that being his—is something too supreme and dazzling to fall suddenly into the light of common day. John Mitford was not matter of fact, and the situation to him was doubly exciting. It was attended, besides, by the disruption of his entire life; and though he would readily have acknowledged that the rest of his existence could not be passed in those exquisite pangs and delights—that mixture of absolute rapture in being with her, and visionary despair at her absence—which had made up the story of his brief courtship; yet there was in him a strong unexpressed sense that the theory of life altogether must henceforward be framed on a higher level—that a finer ideal was before him, higher harmonies, a more perfect state of being; instead of all which dreams, when he came to himself he was seated on a high stool, before a desk,

under the dusty window of Mr Crediton's bank, with the sound of the swinging door, and the voices of the public, and the crackle of notes, and the jingle of coin in his ears, and a tedious trade to learn, in which there seemed to him no possible satisfaction of any kind. He had said that a clergyman's was the only work worth doing, with the sense that it was the only work for mankind in which a man could have any confidence. He had said so, while in the same breath he had expressed his want of absolute belief; and the one sentiment had not affected the other. But here he found himself in a sphere where it did not matter to any one what he believed—where he was utterly out of the way of influencing other people's thoughts—and had none of that work within reach which seems almost indispensable to men of his training—work which should affect his fellow-men. So long as he knew what two and two make, that seemed to be all the knowledge that was required of him. With a sense of surprise which almost stupefied him, he found that all the careful education of his life was as nought to him in his new sphere. If it did not harm him—which sometimes he thought it did—at least it was totally useless. The multiplication table was of more use than Homer or Virgil; and John's mind was the mind of a scholar, not of an active thinker, much less doer. He was the kind of man that dwells and lingers upon the cadence of a line or the turn of a sentence—a man not always very sure which were the most real—the men and women in his books, or those he pushed against in the public ways. "We are such stuff as dreams are made of." Fancy a man with such words in his mouth finding himself all at once a dream among dreams, gazing vaguely over a counter at the

public, feeling himself utterly incapable of any point of encounter with that public such as his education and previous training suggested, except in the way of counting out money to them, or adding up the sums against them. What a wonderful, wonderful change it was! And then to come down to this from that exaltation of love's dream—to jump into this, shivering as into an ice-cold bath, out of all the excitement of youthful plans and fancies, visions of the nobler existence, ecstasy of first betrothal! The shock was so immense that it took away his breath. He sat all silent, chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancy for days together, and then got his hat and walked back to the shabby little rooms he had taken on the outskirts of Crediton, stupefied, and not knowing what he was about. What was he to do when he got there? He ate his badly-cooked and painfully-homely meal, and then he would sit and stare at his two candles as he stared at the public in the bank. He did not feel capable of reading—what was the good of reading? Nothing that he had within his reach could be of any use to him in his new career, and his mind was not in a fit condition for resuming any studies or seeking out any occupation for itself. When Kate made inquiries into his life on the Sunday evenings, he found it very difficult to answer her. What could he say? There was nothing in it which was worth describing, or which it would have given her, he thought, anything but pain to know.

"But tell me, have you nice rooms—is there a nice woman to look after you?" Kate would say. "If you don't answer me I shall have to go and see them some day when you are at the bank. I will say you are my—cousin, or something. Or perhaps if I were to tell the truth," she added, softly, with her favourite trick, almost leaning her head against his arm, "it would interest

her, and she would take more pains."

"And what would you say if you said the truth?" said foolish John. Poor fellow! this was all he had for his sacrifice, and naturally he longed for his hire, such as it was.

"I should say, of course, that you were a nearer one still, and a dearer one," said Kate, with a soft little laugh; "what else? but oh, John, is it not very different? That dear Fanshawe Regis, and your mother, and everything you have been used to. Is it not very, very different?" she cried, expecting that he would tell her how much more blessed were his poor lodgings and close work when brightened by the hope of her.

"Yes, it is very different," he said, in a dreamy, dreary tone. The summer was stealing on; it was August by this time, and the days were shortening. And it was almost dark, as dark as a summer night can be, when they strayed about the garden in the High Street, which was so different from the Rectory garden. There were few flowers, but at the farther end some great lime-trees, old and vast, which made the gravel-path look like a woodland road for twenty paces or so. She could not see his face in the dark, but there was in his voice something of that inflection which promised a flattering end to the sentence. Kate was a little chilled, she did not know why.

"But you don't—grudge it?" she said, softly. "Oh, John, there is something in your voice—you are not sorry you have done so much?—for nothing but *me*?"

"Sorry!" he said, stooping over her—"sorry to be called into life when I did not know I was living! But, Kate, if it were not for *this*, that is my reward for everything, I will not deny that there is a great difference. I should have been working upon men the other way; and one gets contemptuous of money. Never mind, I care for nothing while I have you."

"I never knew any one that was contemptuous of money," said Kate, gravely; "people here say money can do everything. That is why I want you to be rich."

"Dear," he said, holding her close to him, "you don't understand, and neither did I. I don't think I shall ever be rich. How should I, a clerk in a bank? Your father does not show me any favour, and it is not to be expected he should. Who am I, that I should try to steal his child from him? Since I have been here, Kate, there are a great many things that I begin to understand——"

"What?" she said, as he paused; raising in the soft summer dark her face to his.

"Well, for one thing, what a gulf there is between you and me!" he said; "and how natural it was that your father should be vexed. And then, Kate—don't let it grieve you, darling—how very very unlikely it is that I shall ever be the rich man you want me to be. I thought when we spoke of it once that anything you told me to do would be easy; and so it would, if it was definite—anything to bear—if it was labouring night and day, suffering tortures for you——"

Here Kate interrupted him with a little sob of excitement, holding his arm clasped in both her hands: "Oh, John, do I want you to suffer?" she cried. "You should have everything that was best in the world if it was me——"

"But I don't know how to grow rich—I don't think I shall ever know," said John, with a sigh. Up to this moment he had restrained himself and had given no vent to his feelings, but when the ice was once broken they all burst forth. The two went on together up and down under the big lime-trees, she gazing up at him, he bending down to her, as they had done in the old garden at Fanshawe when he confided his difficulties to her. He had thrust off violently that series of difficul-

ties, abandoning the conflict, but only to let a new set of difficulties seize upon him in still greater strength than the former. And the whole was complicated by a sense that it was somehow her doing, and that a complaint of them was next to a reproach of her. But still it was not in nature, his mouth being thus opened, that John could refrain.

"I seem to be always complaining," he said—"one time of circumstances, another time of myself; for it is of myself this time. Many a fellow would be overjoyed, no doubt, to find himself in the way of making his own fortune, but you can't think how little good I am. I suppose I never was very bright. If you will believe me, Kate, not only shall I never make any fortune where your father has placed me, but I am so stupid that I cannot see how a man may rise out of such a position, nor how a fortune is to be made."

"But people do it," said Kate, eagerly; "one hears of them every day. Of course I don't know how. It is energy or something—making up their minds to it; and of course though papa may look cross he must be favourable to you. John, you *know* he must. If I thought he was not, I should make him—I don't know what I should not make him do——"

"You must not make him do anything," said John. "You may be sure I don't mean to give in—I shall try my best, and perhaps there may be more in me than I think. I suppose it is seeing you, and being so far apart from you, that is the worst. Except to-night—if the Sundays came, say three times in a week——"

"I don't think I should like that," said Kate; "but seriously, you know, don't you like to see me—are you—jealous?" she asked, with a little laugh. The talk had been too grave for her, and she was glad to draw it down to a lower sphere.

"If I were," he said, with a sudden glow of passion, "I should go away. I have never faced that idea yet; but if I were—jealous, as you say—"

"What?" she cried, with the curiosity of her kind, clinging to him in the fondest proximity, yet half pleased to play with her keen little dagger in his heart.

"That would be the end," he said, with a long-drawn breath. And a thrill of excitement came over Kate which was more pleasurable than otherwise. Had she really stirred him up to the height of a *grande passion*? It was not that she meant to be cruel to John. But such an opportunity does not come in everybody's way. She could not help wondering suddenly how he would feel under the trial, and how his sufferings would show themselves. As for his going away, she did not put much faith in that. He would be very unhappy, and there would be a certain satisfaction in the sight of his torments. Kate did not say this in words, nor was she conscious of meaning it; but in the mere levity of her power the thought flashed through her mind. For, to be sure, it would only be for a moment that she would let him suffer. When she had enjoyed that evidence of her own supremacy, then she would overwhelm him with kindness, prove to him how foolish he was ever to doubt her, give herself to him without waiting for anybody's leave. But in the meantime that strange curiosity to see how far her power went which is at the bottom of so much cruelty ran through her mind. It all went and came in the twinkling of an eye, passing like the lightning, and when she answered him, poor John had no idea what a sudden gleam of suggestion had come over her, or how far her imagination had gone in the time.

"But there is not going to be an end," she said, in her soft, coaxing voice. "And you will put up

with it, and with papa, and with a great many things we don't like—won't you? for the sake of a poor little girl who is not worth it. Oh, John! you know you committed yourself to all that when you saved my life."

John was nothing loath to commit himself now to anything she asked of him; and as they strayed on under the dark rustling lime-trees, with nobody within sight or sound, and the darkness enclosing them, utter content came over the young man's mind. After all, was not this hour cheaply purchased by all the tedium and all the disgusts of common life? And even the common life looked more endurable in this sweet gloom which was full of Kate's soft breathing, and the soft rustle of her dress, and sense of her presence. She was so close to him, leaning on his arm, and yet he could see nothing but an outline of her by his side. It was thus she had been by him on the night which decided his fate—a shadow-woman, tender, clinging, almost invisible. "Kate, Kate," he said, out of his full heart, "I wonder if you are a little witch leading me astray, for it is always in the dark when I can't see you that you are good to me. When we go in you will be kind and sweet, but you will be Miss Crediton. Are we shadows, you and I? or are you Undine or Lorelei drawing me to my fate?"

"You foolish fellow," said Kate; "how could I be Undine and not a drop of water nearer than Fanshawe Regis? Don't you see that when we go in papa is there? You would not like me to write up in big letters—"I have gone over to the enemy—I don't belong to you any longer." You know John, it would be true. I am not *his* now, poor papa, and he is so fond of me; but you would not like me to put that on a flag and have it carried before me; you would not be so cruel to papa?"

"I am a poor mortal," said John,

"I almost think I could be cruel. If you are not his, are you mine? Say so, you little Queen of Shadows, and I will try to remember it and comfort my heart."

"Whose else should I be?" whispered Kate. And the lover's satisfaction attained for a moment to that point of perfection which lasts but for a moment. His heart seemed to stop beating in that ineffable fullness of content. He took her into his arms in the soft summer darkness—two shadows in a world of shadow. Everything around them, everything before them, was dim with mist. Nothing could be more uncertain than their prospects, a fact which John, at least, had begun to realise fully. The whole scene was an illustration of the words which were so often in his heart. Uncertain gusts of balmy wind, now from one quarter, now from another, agitated the trees overhead. The faint twilight of the skies confused all outlines—the darkness under the trees obliterated every living thing—little mysterious thrills of movement, of the leaves, of the air, of invisible insects or roosted birds, were about them. We are such stuff as dreams are made of. But amid these shadows for one moment supreme satisfaction and delight filled the mind of John at least.

Mr Crediton was in the drawing-room all alone when they went in. Had he been prudent he would have gone to his library, as he usually did, and spared himself the sight; but this night a jealous curiosity had possessed him. To see his child, who had been his for all these years, come in with dazzled, dazzling eyes, and that soft blush on her cheek, and her arm, even as they entered the room, lingering within that of her lover, was very hard upon him. Confound him! he said in his heart, although he knew well that but for John he would have had no child. He noted the change which came over Kate—that change which chilled

her lover, and went through him like a blast from the snow-hills—without any pleasure, almost with additional irritation. She is not even frank, as she used to be, he said to himself. She puts on a face to cheat me, and to make me believe I am something to her still; and it might almost be said that Mr Crediton hated the young fellow who had come between him and his child.

"It is such a lovely evening, papa," said Kate, "we could scarcely make up our minds to come in. It is not the country, of course; but still I am fond of our garden. Even at Fanshawe I don't think there are nicer trees."

"Of course the perfection of everything is at Fanshawe," he said, with a sudden sharpness which changed the very atmosphere of the room all in a moment; "but I think it is imprudent to stay out so late, and it is damp, and there is no moon. I thought you required a moon for such rambles. Please let me have a cup of tea."

"We did very well without a moon," said Kate, trying to keep up her usual tone; but it was not easy, and she went off with a subdued step to the tea-table, and had not even the courage to call John to her, as she generally did. Oh, why didn't papa stay in his own room? she said to herself. It is only one night in the week, and he should not be so selfish. But she took him his tea with her own hand and tried all she could to soothe him. "You have got a headache, papa," she said, tenderly, putting down the cup on the table by him, and looking so anxious, so ingenuous, and innocent, that it was hard to resist her.

"I have no headache," he said; "but I am busy. Don't take any notice, occupy yourselves as you please, without any thought of me."

This speech was produced by a sudden compunction and sense of injustice. It was a sacrifice to right, and yet he was all wrong and set on edge. He thought that Kate should have perceived that this amiability was forced and fictitious; but either she was insensible to it, or she did not any longer care to go deeper than mere words. She kissed his forehead as if he had been in the kindest mood, and said, "Poor papa!—thanks. It is so kind of you to think of us when you are suffering." To think of them! when she must have known he was wishing the fellow away. And then Kate retired to the tea-table, which was behind Mr Crediton, and out of sight, and he saw her beckon to John with a half-imperceptible movement. The young man obeyed, and went and sat beside her, and the sound of their voices in low-toned conversation, with little bursts of laughter and soft exclamations, was gall and wormwood to the father. It was all "that fellow," he thought: his Kate herself would never have used him so; and it was all his self-control could do to prevent him addressing some bitter words to John. But the fact was, it was Kate's doing alone—Kate, who was less happy to-night than usual, but whom his tone had galled into opposition. "No," she was whispering to John, "you are not to go away—not unless you want to be rid of me. Papa ought to be brought to his senses—he has no right to be so cross; and I am not going to give in to him." This was the nature of the conversation which was going on behind Mr Crediton's back. He did not hear it, and yet it gave him a furious sense of resentment, which expressed itself at last in various little assaults.

"Have the goodness not to whisper, Kate," he said. "You know it sets my nerves on edge. Speak out," an address which had the effect of ending all conversation between the lovers for a minute or

two. They sat silent and looked at each other till Mr Crediton spoke again. "I seem unfortunately to act upon you like a wet blanket," he said, with an acrid tone in his voice. "Perhaps you would rather I went away."

At this Kate's spirit was roused. "Papa, I don't know what I have done to displease you," she said, coming forward. "If I am only to see him once in the week, surely I may talk to him when he comes."

"I am not aware that I have objected to your talk," said Mr Crediton, restraining his passion.

"Not in words," said Kate, now fairly up in arms; "but it is not just, papa. It makes John unhappy and it makes me unhappy. He has a right to have me to himself when he comes. You cannot forget that we are engaged. I never said a word when you insisted on once a-week, though it was a disappointment; but you know he ought not to be cheated now."

All this time John had been moving about at the further end of the room, at once angry to the verge of violence, and discouraged to the lowest pitch. He had cleared his throat and tried to speak a dozen times already. Now he came forward, painfully restraining himself. "I ought to speak," he said; "but I dare not trust myself to say anything. Mr Crediton cannot expect me to give up willingly the only consolation I have."

"It is time enough to speak of giving up when any one demands a sacrifice," said Mr Crediton, taking upon him suddenly that superiority of perfect calm with which a middle-aged man finds it so often possible to confute an impatient boy. "I am sorry that my innocent remarks should have irritated you both. You must school me, Kate," he added, with a forced smile, "what I am to do and say."

And then he went to his room, with a sense that he had won the victory. And certainly, if a victory is won every time the other side is

discomfited, such was the case at this moment. John did not say anything—did not even come to be comforted, but kept walking up and down at the other end of the room. It was Kate who had to go to him, to steal her hand within his arm, to coax him back to his usual composure. And it was a process not very easy to be performed. She moved him quickly enough to tender demonstrations over herself, which indeed she had no objection to, but John was chilled and discouraged and cast down to the very depths.

"He was only cross," said Kate; "when he is cross I never pay any attention. Something has gone wrong in business, or that sort of thing. John, dear, say you don't mind. It is not me that am making myself disagreeable: it is only papa."

But it was hard to get John to respond. Notwithstanding that Mr Crediton had retired and left the field open, and that Kate did all in her power to detain him, the young man left her earlier than usual, and with a sufficiently heavy heart. Kate's father was seeking a quarrel—endeavouring to show him the falseness of his position, and make it plain how obnoxious he was. John walked all the long way home to his little lodgings, which were at the other end of the town, contem-

plating the dim Sunday streets, all so dark, with glances of lamplight and dim reflections from the wet pavement—for in the mean time rain had fallen. And this was all he had for all he had sacrificed. He did not reckon Kate herself in the self-discussion. She was worth everything a man could do; but to be thus chained and bound, within sight, yet shut out from her—to be made the butt of another man's jealous resentment—to have a seeming privilege, which was made into a kind of torture—and to have given his life for this,—what could he say even to himself? He sat down in his hard arm-chair and gazed into the flame of his two candles, and felt himself unable to do anything but brood over what had happened. He could not read nor turn his mind from the covert insult, the unwilling consent. And what was to come of it? John covered his face with his hands when he came to that part of the subject. There was nothing to look forward to—nothing but darkness. It was natural that she, a spoiled child of fortune, should smile and trust in something turning up; but as for John, he saw nothing that could turn up; and in all the world there seemed to him no single creature with less hope of moulding his future according to his wishes than himself.

CHAPTER XVI.

This moment of dismay, however, passed over, as the moments of delight did, without bringing about any absolute revolution in John's life. The next day Mr Crediton took occasion to be more than ordinarily civil, repenting of his bad humour, and Kate stopped short before his window as she rode by to wave her hand to him. A man cannot build the comfort of his life permanently on such trifles; but there is a moment when the wave of a girl's hand as she

passes is enough to strengthen and exhilarate his heart. So the crisis blew over as the others had done, and the routine went on. John set his teeth, and confronted his position with all its difficulties, making a desperate effort. A woman might bear such a trial, and live through it; but it is hard upon a man, when he is no longer a boy, to be called upon to give up everything, to change the entire current of his occupations, and make an unquestionable descent in the so-

cial scale, for love, without even giving him its natural compensations. An imprudent marriage is a different thing, for there the consequences are inevitable when once the step has been taken, and have to be borne, will he nill he. But to make love his all—the sole object and meaning of his life—there was in this a certain humiliation which by turns overwhelmed John's fortitude and courage. To give up happiness for higher aims is surely more worthy, more noble, more fit, than to give up everything else for the hope of happiness. He who had made himself wretched over the stumbling-blocks of absolute belief required from him by the Church, was not likely to find much comfort in the thought that he was abandoning every chance of a useful life for the sake of a soft word, a rare caress, or even, to take it at its best, for the chance of eventual selfish personal happiness. But he restrained himself as best he could, and settled down doggedly to his work, trying not to think of it, not to look forward to the moments which were supposed to be his recompense, and were at the same time his punishment. It was indeed a relief to him, and helped him to bear his burden more steadily when the annual removal of the family to Fernwood took place, and Kate vanished from before his eyes. She cried when she parted with him that last Sunday, and John felt a *serrement du cœur* which almost choked him; but still, at the same time, when it was over and she was gone, life on the whole became easier. He made an effort to interest himself in his brother clerks, and enter into their life; but what was a humiliation to John was to them such a badge of superiority that he could make but little of that. He was Mr Crediton's future son-in-law, probably their own future employer, in the eyes of the young men around him, who accepted his advances with a deference and half-concealed pride

which threw John back again upon himself. He had no equals, no companions. To be sure there were plenty of people in Camelford who would have been glad to receive Dr Mitford's son, but he had no desire for the ordinary kind of society. And it is not to be described with what pleasure he saw Fred Huntley, a man whom he had never cared for heretofore, push open the swinging door of the bank, and peer round the place with short-sighted eyes. "Mr Mitford, if you please," Fred said, perhaps rather superciliously, to the clerk who was John's superior, expecting, it was clear, to be ushered into some secret retirement where the principals of the bank might be. When John rose from his desk, Huntley gazed at him with unfeigned astonishment. "What! you here!" he said; and opened his eyes still wider when John turned round and explained to Mr Whichelo that he was going out, and why. "You don't mean to say they stick 'you at a desk like that, among all those fellows?" Fred said, as they left the bank together; which exclamation of wonder revived the original impatience which use and wont by this time had calmed down.

"Exactly like the other fellows," said John; "and quite right too, or why should I be here?"

"Then I suppose you are—learning—the business," said Fred. "Old Crediton must mean you to be his successor. And that is great luck, though I confess it would not have much charm for me."

"It is very well," said John, "I have nothing to complain of. If I can stick to it I suppose I shall earn some money sooner or later, which is a great matter, all you people say."

"Of course it is a great matter," said Fred. "You told that old fellow you were going out in a wonderful explanatory way, as if you thought he mightn't like it. Can't you stay and have something with me

at the hotel? I have to be here all night, much against my will, and I should spend it all alone unless you'll stay."

"Thanks; it does me good to see a known face. I'll stay if you'll have me," said John; and then, as it was still daylight, they took a preparatory stroll about the streets of Camelford. The inn was in the High Street, not very far from the bank and the Crediton mansion. The young men walked about the twilight streets talking of everything in earth and heaven. It was to John as if they had met in the depths of Africa or at a lonely Indian station. He had never been very intimate with Fred Huntley, but they were of the same class, with something like the same training and associations, and the exile could have embraced the new-comer, who spoke his own language, and put the same meaning to ordinary words as he did. It was a long time before he even noticed the inquiring way in which Huntley looked at him, the half-questions he now and then would put sharply in the midst of indifferent conversation, as if to take him off his guard. John was not on his guard, and consequently the precaution was ineffectual; but after a while he observed it with a curious sensation of surprise. It was not, however, till they had dined, and were seated opposite to each other over their modest bottle of claret, that they fairly entered upon personal affairs.

"Do you find the life suit you?" said Fred, abruptly. "I beg your pardon if I am too inquisitive; but of course it must be a great change."

"I am not sure that it suits me particularly," said John; but the glance which accompanied the question had been very keen and searching, and somehow, without knowing it, a sense of suspicion ran through him; "I don't suppose any life does until one is thoroughly used to it. Routine is

the grand safeguard in everything—and perhaps more than in anything else to a clerk in a bank."

"But that is absurd," said Fred. "How long do you and Mr Crediton mean to keep up the farce? a clerk in the bank betrothed to his daughter—it is too good a joke."

"I don't see the farce," said John, "and neither, I suppose, does Mr Crediton; he is not given to joking. Now tell me, Huntley, before we go any further, is it the dear old people at home who have asked you to come and look after me? was it—my mother? She might have known I would tell her at first hand anything there was to tell."

At this speech Fred Huntley became very much confused, though he did not look like a man to be easily put out. He grew red, he cleared his throat, he shuffled his feet about the carpet. "Upon my word you mistake," he said; "I have not seen either Mrs Mitford or the Doctor since you left."

"Then who has sent you?" said John.

"My dear fellow, you have grown mighty suspicious all at once. Why should any one have sent me? may not I look up an old friend for my own pleasure? surely we have known each other sufficiently for that."

"You might," said John, "but I don't think that is the whole question, and it would be best to tell me at once what you want to know—I am quite willing to unfold my experiences," he said, with a forced smile; and then there was a pause—

"The fact of the matter is," said Fred Huntley, after an interval, with an attempt at jocularly, "that you are an intensely lucky fellow. What will you say if I tell you that I have just come from Fernwood, and that if any one sent me it was Kate Crediton, wishing for a report as to your health and spirits—though it is not so long since she has seen you, I suppose?"

"*Kate Crediton*?" said John, haughtily.

"I beg your pardon: my sisters are intimate with her, you know, and I hear her called so fifty times in a day—one falls into it without knowing. Hang it! since you will have it, *Mitford*, *Miss Crediton* did speak to me before I left. She heard I was coming to *Camelford*, and she came to me the night before—last night, in fact—and told me you were here alone, and she was uneasy about you. I wish anybody was uneasy about me. She wanted to know if you were lonely, if you were unhappy—half a hundred things. I hope you don't object to her anxiety. I assure you it conveyed a very delightful idea of your good fortune to me."

"Whatever *Miss Crediton* chose to say must have been like herself," cried John, trembling with sudden passion, "and no doubt she thought you were a very proper ambassador. But you must be aware, *Huntley*, that ladies judge very differently on these points from men. If you please we will not go further into that question."

"It was not I who began it, I am sure," said Fred; and another pause ensued, during which John sat with lowering brows, and an expression no one had ever seen on his face before. "Look here, *Mitford*," said Fred, suddenly, "don't go and vex yourself for nothing. If any indiscretion of mine should make dispeace between you——"

"Pray don't think for a moment that such a thing is likely to happen," said John.

"Well—well—if I am too presumptuous in supposing anything I say to be likely to move you;" *Huntley* went on, with a restrained smile—"but you really must not do *Miss Crediton* injustice through any clumsiness of mine. It came about in the most natural way. She was afraid there had been some little sparring between her father and yourself, and was

anxious, as in her position it was so natural to be——"

"Exactly," said John. "Are you on your way home now, or are you going back to *Fernwood*? I should ask you to take a little parcel for me if you were likely to be near *Fanshawe*. How are the birds? I don't suppose I shall do them much harm this year."

"Oh, they're plentiful enough," said *Huntley*; "my father has the house full, and I am not much of a shot, you know. They would be charmed to see you if you would go over for a day or two. I mean to make a run to *Switzerland*, myself. *Vaughan* has some wonderful expedition on hand—up the *Matterhorn*, or something—and I should like to be on the spot."

"Shall you go up with him?" said John.

"Not I, but I should like to be at hand to pick up what remains of him if he comes to grief—and to share his triumph, of course, if he succeeds," *Fred* added, with a laugh—"a friend's privilege. Are you going?—it is scarcely ten o'clock."

"You forget I am a man of business nowadays," said John, with an uncomfortable smile; and then they stood over the table, facing but not looking at each other; a suppressed resentment and excitement possessing one, which he was doing his utmost to restrain—and the other embarrassed, with a mixture of charitable vexation and malicious pleasure in the effect he had produced.

"I'll walk with you," said *Huntley*; for to shake hands and separate at this moment would have been something like an irredeemable breach—and that, for two men belonging to the same county, and almost the same set, was a thing to be avoided. John had not sufficient command of himself to make any effusive reply, but he did not object; and presently they were in the street walking side by side and discoursing on every subject except—

the one in their minds. They had not walked very far, however, before some indefinable impulse made John turn back to cast a glance at the bank—the scene of his daily penance—and the vacant house that stood beside it. They were a good way down the street, on the opposite side. He gave a slight start, which his companion perceived, but offered no explanation of it. “Let us turn back a little, I have forgotten something,” he said. Huntley, who had no particular interest where they went, turned as he was desired, and was just debating with himself whether, all the due courtesies having been attended to, he might not go into his hotel as they passed it, and leave John at peace to pursue his sullen way. But it occurred to him that John made a half-perceptible pause at the door of the “Greyhound,” as if inviting him to withdraw, and this movement decided the question. “Confound the fellow! I’m not going to be dismissed when he pleases,” Fred said to himself; and so went on, not knowing where he went,

“I thought so!” cried John, suddenly, in the midst of some philosophical talk, interrupting Fred in the middle of a sentence, and he rushed across the street to the bank, to his companion’s utter consternation. “What is the matter?” cried Fred. John dashed at the closed door, ringing the bell violently, and beating with his stick upon the panels. Then he called loudly to a passing policeman—“Knock at the house!” he cried. “Fire! fire! Huntley, for heaven’s sake, fly for the engines!—they will let me in and not you, or I should go myself—don’t lose a moment. Fire! fire!”

“But stop a little,” cried Huntley in dismay, plucking at John’s arm; and what with the sound of the bell knocking and the peals of the bell which sounded sepulchrally in the empty place, he scarcely could hear his own voice. “Stop a moment—

you are deceiving yourself; I see no signs of fire.”

“You run!” cried John, hoarsely, turning to the policeman, “or you—five pounds to the man who gets there first! Signs!—Good God! the wretches are out. We must break open the door.” And he beat at it, as if he would beat it in, with a kind of frenzy; while Huntley stood stupefied and saw two or three of the bystanders, who had already begun to collect, start off with a rush to get the fire-engines. “There’s nobody in the house within, sir, or else I can’t make ‘em hear,” said the policeman, coming up to John for his orders. “Then we must break in,” cried John. “There’s a locksmith in the next street: you fly and fetch him, my good fellow. And where shall we get some ladders? There is a way of getting in from the house if we were once in the house.”

“Not to make too bold, sir,” said the policeman, “I’d like to know afore breaking into folks’ houses, if you had any title to do the like. You’re not Mr Crediton, and he aint got no son.”

John drew himself to his full height, and even then in his excitement glanced at Huntley, who kept by his side, irresolute and ignorant, not knowing what to do. “I am closely connected with Mr Crediton,” he said; “nobody can have a better right to look after his affairs; and he is away from home. Get us ladders, and don’t let us stand parleying here.”

The policeman looked at him for a moment, and then moved leisurely across the street to seek the ladders, while in the mean time the two young men stood in front of the blind house with all its shuttered windows, and the closed door which echoed hollow to John’s assault. The dark front so jealously bolted and barred, all dangers without shut out, and the fiery traitor within ravaging at its leisure, drove John wild, excited as

he was to begin with. "Good heavens! to think we must stand here," he said, ringing once more, but this time so violently that he broke the useless bell. They heard it echo shrilly through the silent place in the darkness. "Mr White the porter's gone out for a walk—I seed him," said a boy; "there aint no one there." "But I see no signs of fire," cried Fred. Just then there came silently through the night air a something which contradicted him to his face—a puff of smoke from somewhere, nobody could tell where, and all at once through the freshness of the autumn night the smell of fire suddenly breathed round them. Fred uttered one sharp exclamation, and then stood still, confounded. As for John, he gave a spring at the lower window and caught the iron bar and swung himself up. But the bar resisted his efforts, and there was nothing for it but to wait. When the ladders were at last visible, moving across the gloom, he rushed at them without taking time to think, and snatching one out of the slow hands of the indifferent bearers, placed it against the wall of the house, while Fred stood observing, and was up almost at the sill of an unshuttered window on the upper floor before Huntley could say a word. Then Fred contented himself with standing outside and looking on. "One is enough for that sort of work," he said half audibly, and fell into conversation with the policeman, who stood with an anxious countenance beside him. "I hope as the gentleman won't hurt himself," said the policeman. "I hope it's true as he's Mr Crediton's relation, sir. Very excited he do seem, about not much, don't you think, sir? And them engines will be tearing down, running over the children before a man knows."

"Do you think there is not much danger, then?" said Fred.

"Danger!" cried the man—"Lord bless you! if it was a regu-

lar fire don't ye think as I'd have noticed it, and me just finished my round not half an hour since? But it's hawful negligent of that fellow White. I knew as he'd been going to the bad for some time back, and I'm almost glad he's catched; but as for fire, sir——"

At this moment another puff of smoke, darker and heavier, came in a gust from the roof, and the policeman putting his eye to the key-hole, fell back again exclaiming vehemently, "By George! but it is a fire, and the gentleman's right," and sprang his rattle loudly. The crowd round gave a half-cheer of excitement, and up full speed rattled the fire-engines, clearing the way, and filling the air with clangour. At the same moment arrived a guilty sodden soul, wringing his hands, in which was a big key. "Gentlemen," he cried, "I take you to witness as I never was out before. It's an accident as nobody couldn't have foreseen. It's an accident as has never happened before." "Open the door, you ass!" cried Huntley; and then the babel of sounds, the gleams of wild light, the hiss of the falling water, all the confused whirl of circumstance that belongs to such a moment swept in, and took all distinct understanding even from the self-possessed perceptions of Fred.

As for John, when he found himself in the silent house which he had entered from the window, he had no time to think of his sensations. He had snatched the policeman's lantern from his hand ere he made his ascent, and went hastily stumbling through the unknown room, and down the long, echoing stairs, as through a wall of darkness; projecting before him the round eye of light, which made the darkness if possible more weird and mystical. His heart was very sore; it pained him physically, or at least he thought it did, lying like a lump of lead in his breast. But he was glad of the excitement which forced his thoughts away from him-

self. To unbolt the ponderous doors at either end of the passage which led into the bank, took him what seemed an age; but at last he succeeded in getting them open. A cloud of smoke enveloped him as he went in, and all but drove him back. He burst through it with a confused sense of flames and suffocation, and blazing sheets of red, that waved long tongues towards him to catch him as he rushed through them; but, notwithstanding, he forced his way into Mr Crediton's room, where he knew there were valuable papers. He thought of nothing as he rushed through the jaws of death; neither of Kate, nor of his past life, nor of his home, nor of any of those things which are supposed to gleam upon the mind in moments of supreme danger. He thought only of the papers in Mr Crediton's room. Unconsciously he formed an idea of the origin of the fire, as, panting, choked, and scorched, he gathered, without seeing them, into his arms the box of papers, and seized upon everything he could feel with his hands upon the table. He could see nothing, for his eyes were stinging with the smoke, and scorched with the flames. When he had grasped everything he could feel, with his senses failing him, he pushed blindly for the door, hoping, so far as he had wit enough to hope anything, that he might reach the front of the house, and be able to unloose its fastenings before he gave way. By this time there was a roaring of the fire in his ears; an insufferable smell of burning wood and paint; all his senses were assailed, even that of touch, which recoiled from the heated walls against which he staggered trying to find the door. At last the sharp pain with which he struck violently against it, cutting open his forehead, brought him partially to himself. He half-staggered half-fell into the passage, dropping upon his knees, for his arms were full, and he had no hand to support himself

with. Then all at once a sudden wild gust of air struck him in the face from the other side; the flames, with (he thought) a cry, leaped at him from behind, and he fell prostrate, claspimg tight the papers he had recovered, and knew no more.

It was half an hour later when Fred Huntley, venturing into the narrow hall of the burning house after the first detachment of firemen had entered with their hatchets, found some one lying drenched with water from the engines, and looking like a calcined thing that would drop to powder at a touch, against the wall. The calcined creature moved when it was touched, and gave signs of life; but every one by this time had forgotten John in the greater excitement of the fire; and it had not occurred to Huntley even, the only one who knew much about him, to ask what had become of him. He was dragged out, not very gently, to the steps in front; and there, fortunately for John, was the porter who had been the cause of all the mischief, and who stood outside wringing his hands, and getting in everybody's way. "Look after him, you!" cried Fred, plunging in again to the heart of the conflict. Some of the clerks had arrived by this time, and were anxiously directing the fire-engines to play upon the strong room in which most of the valuables of the bank were placed. Fred Huntley was not noticeably destitute of courage, but he was more ready to put himself in the front when the pioneers had passed before, and there were plenty of followers to support him behind. He took the command of affairs while John lay moaning, scorched, and drenched on the wet step, with people rushing past him, now and then almost treading on him, and pain gradually rousing him into consciousness. They had tried to take his charge from him and he had resisted, showing a dawn of memory. When the water from the hose struck him again in the

face, he struggled half up, and sat and looked round him. "Good Lord, Mr Mitford!" said Mr Whichelo, the chief cashier, discovering him with consternation. "Take me somewhere," gasped John; "and take care of these," holding out his innocent booty. Mr Whichelo rushed at him eagerly. "God bless you!" he cried; "it was that I was thinking of. How did you get it? have you been in the fire and the flames to fetch it, and saved my character?" cried the poor man, hysterically. "Hold your tongue, and take me somewhere!" cried John; and the next moment his senses had once more forsaken him, and he knew nothing about either blaze or flame.

The after incidents of the night, of which John was conscious only by glimpses, were—that he was carried to the inn opposite, his treasures taken from his arms and locked carefully away, and the doctor brought, who examined him, and shook his head, and said a great deal about a shock to the nerves. John was in one of his intervals of consciousness when this was said, and raised himself from the strange distance and dreaminess in which he seemed to be lying. "I have had no shock to my nerves," he said. "I'm burnt and sore and soaking, that's all. Plaster me or mend me somehow." And this effort saved him from the feverish confusion into which he was falling. When he came to himself he felt that he was indeed sore all over, with minute burns in a hundred places about his person; his hair and his eyelashes scorched off, and his skin all blistered and burning. Perhaps it was the pain which kept him in full possession of his faculties for all the rest of the night. Then he felt it was not the fire he had cared for, nor the possible loss, but only the pure satisfaction of doing something. When they told

him the fire was got under, the strong room saved, and that nothing very serious had happened, the news did not in the least excite him. He had asked as if he was profoundly concerned, and he was scarcely even interested. "Pain has often that effect," he heard the doctor say. "This kind of irritating, ever-present suffering, absorbs the mind. Of course he cares. Tell him again, that the news may get into his mind." And then somebody told him again, and John longed to cry, What the devil is that to me! but restrained himself. It was nothing to him; and the burning on his skin was not much: it was nothing indeed to the burning in his heart. She had discussed with another matters which were between themselves. She had sent another to report on his looks and his state of mind; there was between her and another man a secret alliance which he was not intended to know. The blood seemed to boil in John's veins as he lay tossing through the restless night, trying in vain to banish the thought from him. But the thought, being intolerable, would not be banished. It lay upon him, and tore at him as the vultures tore Prometheus. She had discussed their engagement with Fred Huntley; taken him into her confidence—that confidence which should have been held sacred to another. John was thrown back suddenly and wildly upon himself. His heart throbbed and swelled as if it would break, and felt as if hot irons had seared it. He imagined them sitting together, talking him over. He even framed the account of this accident which Huntley would give. He would be at her ear, while John was banished. He denied that it had been a shock to his nerves; and yet his nerves had received such a shock as he might never recover in his life.

MISS AUSTEN AND MISS MITFORD.

IN the beginning of last century, two young women bearing names which are now as familiar as the greatest to English readers, were making themselves very pleasant to their surroundings in the very heart of all the stillness and decorum of rural gentility. They both belonged to that class of English gentry with a clerical tinge, which is in some respects the pleasantest class to be met with in the little hierarchy of country life. They were well born and well connected, with a modest position which not even poverty could seriously affect, and the habit from their childhood of meeting people of some distinction and eminence, and of feeling themselves possessed of so much share in the bigger business of the world as is given by the fact of having friends and relations playing a real part in it. No educational process is more effectual than this simple fact, and Jane Austen and Mary Mitford were both within its influence. They were both well educated, according to the requirements of their day, though the chances are that neither could have passed her examination for entrance into any lady's college, or had the remotest chance with the University Inspectors; and it is not unconsolatory to find, by the illumination which a little lamp of genius here and there thus throws upon the face of the country, that women full of cultivation and refinement have existed for generations before ladies' colleges were thought of, notwithstanding the universal condemnation bestowed upon our old-fashioned canons of feminine instruction. Miss Austen was a little girl in the parsonage of Steventon in Hertfordshire when Miss Mitford's mother lived in the parsonage of Ashe close by. There was thus even a link of local connection between them. The Mit-

fords were the finer of the two families, boasting higher connections on both sides of the house; but the Austens were of irreproachable gentility, with offshoots that kept continually increasing the consequence of the original stem, adding other names and new estates to the well-to-do numerous affectionate race. It became a kind of clan as years went on, a thing which not unfrequently happens in the second or third generation to the descendants of a considerable family. Austens and Leighs and Knights, all originally Austen, there were so many brothers and sisters, and cousins and uncles and nephews among them, that ordinary society became almost unnecessary to the prolific race. The Mitfords were different—their relations were grand and distant ones, to be seen only now and then on a splendid expedition which counted like an era in a life; and theirs was the highly concentrated, intensified existence of a very small family living entirely for each other, and exhibiting between themselves that ecstatic adoring love which it is so difficult for the more sober portions of the world to understand, and which outsiders are so apt to smile at.

The education of the two young women of genius was thus different. Jane Austen grew up to womanhood in a gentle obscurity, one of many—her individual existence lost in the more noisy claims of the brothers, whose way in the world has to be the subject of so much thought; while the boys' settlement in life, their Oxford successes, their going to sea, their early curacies, and prize-money, filled everybody's mind. Jane, it is evident, gave nobody any trouble. Even her elder sister, Cassandra, to whom she was specially devoted, had a story which

must have thrilled the quiet vicarage. She was betrothed to a lover who was poor, and who went to the West Indies to push his fortune—"to make the crown a pound," and there died. No doubt the maiden widow, who remained faithful to him all her life, filled up every corner vacant from the boys in the tender heart of Steventon vicarage; and Jane, fair, sprightly, and sweet, with no story, no grief, no unfortunate lover or unsettled position to give her affairs a factitious interest, was only Jane in the affectionate house—a bright-eyed, light-footed girl—one of the creatures evidently born to marry and be the light of some other home. Nothing can be more amusing and attractive than the glimpses, very brief and slight as they are, of this girl, through the much trellis-work and leafage of her nephew Mr Austen Leigh's biography of her. It has not, indeed, any right to be called a biography; and were not the writer so frank and humble in his consciousness of the fact, the critic might be tempted to certain hackneyed comments on the common blunder of book-making. But Mr Austen Leigh is aware of his imperfections and disarms us. What he does is to paint for us somewhat heavily the outside of the house in which she lived, with the honeysuckle and the roses climbing in at the windows; and, as we look, sometimes a pretty shadow will cross the curtain, a pleasant face look out, a voice quite unpretending in its sweetness be heard singing within. That is all: hazel eyes and natural curls of brown hair—round cheeks, a trifle too round, but all aglow with the clear, sweet, colour of health and youth—a figure "rather tall and slender," a "step light and firm." Not Jane Austen only, but hosts of sweet women besides her, might have sat for the picture. She took long walks with Cassandra, sometimes in pattens, between the double hedgerows through the green Hertfordshire

lanes. If Cassandra had been condemned to have her head cut off, their mother thought, Jane would have offered to share the punishment; and next to Cassandra, the sailor-boys of the family seem to have filled her heart. She was fond of knowing all about her neighbours, of hearing their gossip, and noting their ways, and laughing at them softly with that delicate fun which dull people never find out or understand. She was an accomplished needlewoman, great in satin stitch, giving her friends pretty presents of fairy housewives, filled with needles and thread, and a little copy of verses in the tiny pocket—and was not ashamed to spend a day, as young ladies in the country sometimes have to do, over some piece of dress-making, accompanying it with the merriest talk. How pleasant is the picture! She read, too, whatever was going, with a young woman's natural universal appetite, and was delightful to the eye and dear to the heart of all the Austens, and all the Leighs, and all Steventon. When the years went on, and this sweet young woman became aunt Jane, the change was so soft and slight as scarcely to count. She wore a cap over the pretty brown curls—not that she had any occasion to do so, for her pleasant life was only forty years long altogether, and such bright-eyed souls in the soft serenity of maidenhood do not grow old. But in youth and in maturity she was alike fenced from the outer world by troops of friends, called only by names of love—sister, daughter, aunt—all her life surrounded by every kind of relationship, and with no inducement to come down from her pedestal and go out into the bitter arena where the strong triumph and the needy struggle, except that prick of genius which is like the rising of the sap in the trees, or the bubble of the water at the spring, and must find utterance somehow in sparkle, or in foliage, or in song.

Mary Mitford was a very different being. She was an only child, the apple of their eye to her father and mother,—infinitely precocious, and encouraged in her precocity—set up between the two admiring foolish people who had given her birth as an idol to be worshipped, an oracle whose utterances were half inspired. Her education was the best that, according to ordinary rules, could be procured. She was sent to school in London, and encouraged in every attempt to distinguish herself which could occur to the emulous mind of a school-girl; and in the midst of her little struggles and triumphs appears to us in her schoolroom writing such letters as an elderly friend might have written to the “dear darlings,” who are her father and mother, letting loose her youthful opinion, and giving her advice in the most astonishing way. The Mitfords were rich in those days, or at least they had not yet finally left off the habit and sense of being rich; and their daughter did everything and learned everything which was considered right for a young lady of family and fashion to do. And the perfect freedom of the intercourse between herself and her parents, joined, no doubt, to a certain youthful confidence in her own judgment and wisdom, give a curious independence and air of maturity to what she says. At fifteen she announces her preference of Pope’s translation of Homer to Dryden’s, with all the energy and promptitude of her age. “Dryden is so fond of triplets and Alexandrines, that it is much heavier reading; and though he is reckoned a much more harmonious versifier than Pope, some of his lines,” says the young critic, “are so careless, that I shall not be sorry when I have finished it. . . . I am now reading that beautiful opera of Metastasio, ‘Themistocles;’ and when I have finished that, I shall read Tasso’s ‘Jerusalem Delivered,’” she adds. “How you would dote on

Metastasio, my sweet Tod!” (one of her names for her father.) “I am much flattered, my darlings,” she writes, a little later, to both her parents, “by the praises you bestowed on my last letter, though I have not the vanity to think I deserve them. It has ever been my ambition to write like my darlings, though I fear I shall never attain their style.”

This amiable, confident, affectionate, warm-hearted, self-assured girl, thus entering the world with many of the faults incident to the dangerous position of an only child, was born a letter-writer. For half a century after this she continued to pour out her rash, sudden judgments, opinions sometimes sound and sometimes superficial, and outbursts of exaggerated fondness chiefly addressed to her father, whom she continued until his death to address in the same undignified way. He was her “sweet Tod,” her “best-beloved darling,” her “ittay boy,” the recipient of a great deal of good advice, and now and then some admonition, but always the object of a gushing fondness, which even at fifteen must have concealed some unconscious half-contempt. Her letters are often amusing, and they are the kind of reading which quantities of people delight in; but we question whether, after all, it is fair to a dead woman to lay bare all her little vanities, her self-importance, her hasty opinions, all her fluctuations from one fancy to another, and the misfortunes which have given shape and colour to her whole life. In saying this, we do not mean to imply that such a collection of letters should not be printed. The public has to be amused at all costs, and we can well imagine what a temptation they must have been to an executor. But still the reader cannot choose but be struck by the curious disadvantage to begin with in which poor Miss Mitford is placed by her fluent pen, in comparison with the more reticent woman whose name we have

coupled with hers. We have been so often told that the faculty of writing letters is a special gift, and one of the most charming of literary talents, that it is needless to say anything more on so hackneyed a subject. If it could be possible to put the real emotions of a life into such letters as form the three volumes now before us, they would no doubt be of infinite interest to all readers. But that, we well know, is impossible; for perhaps no man nor woman does ever in his or her life write more than a dozen letters which are wholly inspired by any vehement reality of sentiment. Miss Mitford has told us a great deal about her own life in the pleasantest way in the bits of autobiography which are scattered through her works; and the chief interest of her letters consists in the further revelations they make of her domestic history. In other respects they are not remarkable. Distinguished names, no doubt, occur here and there throughout their course; but the most well known persons among her correspondents (with the exception of Mrs Barrett Browning, with whom she became intimate in the latter part of her life), were Haydon the painter and Charles Kemble. And all that she has to say about others is her own enthusiastic opinion of the moment,—her womanish admiration of Whitbread's fine head and natural eloquence; her half-doubting admiration of Scott; her snatches of very ordinary literary gossip about Moore and Byron. A sprinkling of well known names is not sufficient to give to a long series of private letters any title to be considered a contribution to the literary history of the time. What intelligent young lady of the present or any other period might not write to her correspondents as follows:—"Have you read Southey's *Life of Nelson*? . . . It is a work which I earnestly recommend to you as one of the most beautiful pieces of biography I ever met

with." Or again: "I never can read Miss Edgeworth's works without finding the wonderful predominance of the head over the heart. . . . I am perfectly well inclined to agree with you in attributing the tiresome parts of her works to her prosing father." Or again: "Have you seen my Lord Byron's ode? and are you not shocked at the suicidal doctrine it inculcates? He will finish that way himself from fair weariness of life. But true courage makes a different ending." This is not giving us any information about Southey, or Byron, or the Edgeworths; and there is certainly nothing in the notes themselves to entitle them to the dignity of print.

The two books from which we are to draw any new sparks of light that may be in them, in respect to two women who have a special claim upon the interest of their country, are thus without any sound *raison d'être*, not specially called for, not conveying very much information that is new to us. But they form an occasion for recollecting over again, in one case, a series of works which have found for themselves a place among English classics; and, in the other, a great deal of genial, pleasant writing,—the brightest, sunshiny, rural sketches of a state of things which is daily changing, and may soon come to be purely historical. Miss Mitford has no right to a place in the same rank with Miss Austen; and yet there are qualities in her writings superior to Miss Austen's—a breadth and atmosphere impossible to the greater writer. The one recognises a big world about her, even though she only draws it within the limited proportions of 'Our Village'—a world full of different classes—rich and poor, small and great; whereas the other confines herself to a class—the class of which she has herself the most perfect knowledge—striking out with an extraordinary conscientiousness which one does not know whether

to call self-will or self-denial, everything above and everything below. Lady Catherine de Burgh and the housekeeper at Pemberly—conventional types of the heaven above and the abyss below—are the only breaks which Miss Austen ever permits herself upon the level of her squirearchy; while Miss Mitford's larger heart takes in all the Joes and Pollys and Harriets of a country-side, and makes their wooings and jealousies as pleasant to us as if they were the finest ladies and gentlemen. To be sure, Miss Austen's ladies and gentlemen are seldom fine; but they are all to be found in the same kind of house with the same kind of surroundings. Their poverties, when they have any, are caused in a genteel way by the entail of an estate, or by the premature death of the father without leaving an adequate provision for his lovely and accomplished girls. The neglect which leaves the delicate heroine without a horse to ride, or the injury conveyed in the fact that she has to travel post without a servant, is the worst that happens. If it were not that the class to which she thus confines herself was the one most intimately and thoroughly known to her, we should be disposed to consider it, as we have said, a piece of self-denial on Miss Austen's part to relinquish all stronger lights and shadows; but perhaps it is better to say that she was conscientious in her determination to describe only what she knew, and that nature aided principle in this singular limitation. Of itself, however, it throws a certain light upon her character, which is not the simple character it appears at the first glance, but one full of subtle power, keenness, finesse, and self-restraint—a type not at all unusual among women of high cultivation, especially in the retirement of the country, where such qualities are likely enough to be unappreciated or misunderstood.

Mr Austen Leigh, without mean-

ing it, throws out of his dim little lantern a passing gleam of light upon the fine vein of feminine cynicism which pervades his aunt's mind. It is something altogether different from the rude and brutal male quality that bears the same name. It is the soft and silent disbelief of a spectator who has to look at a great many things without showing any outward discomposure, and who has learned to give up any moral classification of social sins, and to place them instead on the level of absurdities. She is not surprised or offended, much less horror-stricken or indignant, when her people show vulgar or mean traits of character, when they make it evident how selfish and self-absorbed they are, or even when they fall into those social cruelties which selfish and stupid people are so often guilty of, not without intention, but yet without the power of realising half the pain they inflict. She stands by and looks on, and gives a soft half-smile, and tells the story with an exquisite sense of its ridiculous side, and fine stinging yet soft-voiced contempt for the actors in it. She sympathises with the sufferers, yet she can scarcely be said to be sorry for them; giving them unconsciously a share in her own sense of the covert fun of the scene, and gentle disdain of the possibility that meanness and folly and stupidity could ever really wound any rational creature. The position of mind is essentially feminine, and one which may be readily identified in the personal knowledge of most people. It is the natural result of the constant, though probably quite unconscious, observation in which a young woman, with no active pursuit to occupy her, spends, without knowing it, so much of her time and youth. Courses of lectures, no doubt, or balls, or any decided out-of-door interest, interferes with this involuntary training; but such disturbances were rare in Miss Austen's

day. A certain soft despair of any one human creature ever doing any good to another—of any influence overcoming those habits and moods and peculiarities of mind which the observer sees to be more obstinate than life itself—a sense that nothing is to be done but to look on, to say perhaps now and then a softening word, to make the best of it practically and theoretically, to smile and hold up one's hands and wonder why human creatures should be such fools,—such are the foundations upon which the feminine cynicism which we attribute to Miss Austen is built. It includes a great deal that is amiable, and is full of toleration and patience, and that habit of making allowance for others which lies at the bottom of all human charity. But yet it is not charity, and its toleration has none of the sweetness which proceeds from that highest of Christian graces. It is not absolute contempt either, but only a softened tone of general disbelief—amusement, nay enjoyment, of all those humours of humanity which are so quaint to look at as soon as you dissociate them from any rigid standard of right or wrong. Miss Austen is not the judge of the men and women she collects round her. She is not even their censor to mend their manners; no power has constituted her her brother's keeper. She has but the faculty of seeing her brother clearly all round as if he were a statue, identifying all his absurdities, quietly jeering at him, smiling with her eyes without committing the indecorum of laughter. In one case only, so far as we can recollect, in the character of Miss Bates in 'Emma,' does she rise beyond this, and touch the region of higher feeling by comprehension of the natural excellence that lies under a ludicrous exterior. It is very lightly touched, but yet it is enough to show that she was capable of a tenderness for the object of her soft laughter—a capability which

converts that laughter into something totally different from the gentle derision with which she regards the world in general. Human-kind stands low in her estimation, in short, as a mass. There are a few pleasant young people here and there to redeem it, or even an old lady now and then, or in the background a middle-aged couple who are not selfish, nor vulgar, nor exacting. But there is a great deal more amusement to be got out of the mean people, and to them accordingly she inclines.

We have said that Mr Austen Leigh throws a little feeble light on this particular of the great novelist's character. In almost the only view of her youth which he is able to give us, he tells us of "an old copy-book containing several tales," childish essays at composition, which were "generally intended to be nonsensical." Her first book was written when she was twenty, so that it is a little difficult to divine exactly what her biographer means when he speaks of a time when she was "quite a girl." But he goes on to inform us of "another stage of her progress, during which she produced several tales not without merit, but which she considered unworthy of publication. . . . Instead of presenting faithful copies of nature," he adds, "these tales were generally burlesques, ridiculing the improbable events and exaggerated statements which she had met with in sundry silly romances." Such a commencement is not without its significance. A girl who ridiculed improbable events and exaggerated sentiments between the ages of sixteen and twenty, must already have begun to learn the lesson congenial to her temperament, and commenced that amused, indifferent, keen-sighted, impartial inspection of the world as a thing apart from herself, and demanding no excess of sympathy, which is characteristic of all the work of her life.

It is not to be supposed, how-

ever, that our opinion of Miss Austen or her work is lessened by this view of her character. A fine poetical enthusiasm for her fellow-creatures, and belief in them, might have been a sentiment for which we should have felt greater sympathy, as in itself it seems more natural and congenial to the early speculations of youth. But unfortunately enthusiasm has a great tendency to make itself ridiculous in its earlier manifestations, and could have had no share in the production of such a book as *'Pride and Prejudice,'* or the charming, sprightly pages of *'Emma.'* Nothing but a mind of this subtle, delicate, speculative temper, could have set before us pictures which are at once so refined and so trenchant, so softly feminine and polite, and so remorselessly true.

If contrast be expedient to bring out the full force of individual character, no more effectual foil could be found than by placing Mary Mitford by Jane Austen's side. The fat, roundabout, roly-poly girl, who was winning prizes in her London school, and chattering to her "dear darlings," and pouring out every funny little exaggerated sentiment and clever little bit of observation that was in her, with the most charming absence of humour, when the pretty young lady in the Steventon vicarage had begun to write her novels, was as full of enthusiasm as the other was destitute of it. But then her enthusiasm embraced everything with a want of perspective as amusing as her own utter want of any perception of its absurdity. Her father was her "darling," but so was her dog and her owl, and a multiplicity of other pets. She finds Whitbread, whom she sees at a public meeting, to be "exquisitely handsome—a most elegant figure," said the ardent girl, "and a voice which I could listen to with transport, even if he spoke in an unknown tongue!" Her friend Miss Rowden's poem, "The Pleasures

of Friendship," she finds equal to "the celebrated works on 'Memory' and 'Hope,'" and its descriptions are, she considers, "exquisitely beautiful." Whatever she loves becomes by an instantaneous process beautiful to her. The glamour of the poets is in her eyes. The father who ruined all her earthly prospects, and made her a literary drudge through all her mature womanhood, continues to receive the same worshipping admiration and love from her after all the illusions of youth were dispelled, and she had been taught to estimate his deficiencies by something approaching a just standard. The same characteristics accompany her when she begins her most living work, the pleasant records of *'Our Village.'* She is, like her more illustrious companion, a spectator in the tranquil breathing scene; yet what a difference is there in the spectatorship! While Miss Austen sees only the ladies and gentlemen, the genial blue eyes of the younger woman warm in a kindly sympathy over all the world. She spies at once, not the gentry at their drawing-room windows, but the cheerful haymakers in the field, the women standing at their doors; and with eyes shining with fun, and yet tender with sympathy, stops to point out to us the cobbler and his wife, the poor shopkeeper overwhelmed with debt and care, the pretty Letty or Patty, with red eyes, in a corner, who has quarrelled with her lover. Miss Mitford's world is a world twice as full as Miss Austen's. It is indeed overflowing with life, like a mediæval picture—passengers on all the ways, market-carts as well as carriages, and Dame Whittaker with her great basket, and little Harry on the dusty path, as well as my lady with her footman behind her, who perhaps, if he is an honest lad, and belongs to the country-side, has his story too. And though the villagers are sometimes tyrannical and unjust, and very cross to their

young people, yet there is always a soft place in their hearts somewhere or other, a string that being touched will discourse gentler music. Miss Austen's work is infinitely more perfect; she is a far greater artist, going deeper and seeing farther, but her world is not such a pleasant world as that of her contemporary. The skies are often leaden and still in the greater picture, but in the lesser they are always aglow with sunshine or tumultuous with real clouds; there is always a fresh air blowing, and the cottage windows shine, and the surface of the earth is gay with flowers. Whether it is peculiar to Berkshire or to Miss Mitford one cannot quite tell; but one feels it must be Berkshire, every detail is so true. What banks of violets, what primroses by the hedgerows, what thickets of honeysuckle and rose! and were there ever such geraniums as those in the garden, which is so little and so gorgeous, and so carefully tended, where our friend sits writing hard by, and her handsome father, with his lofty white head, and all his sins forgiven, loafs about in the sunshine, complacently conscious of having spent three fortunes; and Ben is audible in the distance grooming the white pony, or trim Harriet crosses the corner of the flower-beds with her white apron blazing in the summer brightness? The picture is a little false, because, if we could look under the surface, the handsome old father is a worthless personage enough, notwithstanding his beauty; and his daughter, as she writes, has a sore heart, and does not know how the bills are to be paid, and is weary beyond description of drudging at her pen all day long for daily bread. Miss Austen would set it before you in three sentences, so that you would no longer see any beauty in the scene. She would impale Dr Mitford with a keen sudden touch and the usual smile in her eyes; and however sensible she was of his daughter's goodness,

could not resist the temptation of letting you know that Miss Mary was fat and somewhat gushing, and thought very well of her literary fancy-work. And Ben and Harriet and the white pony, those half-seen accessories, which give population and fulness to the other sketch, would disappear altogether from Miss Austen's canvas, along with the blazing geraniums, and all the soft delicious breathing of the more fragrant flowers. It would be much finer, clearer, distinct as daylight—a thing done in aquafortis, and capable of outliving the world; but for our poor part, we would rather have Miss Mitford's sweet flowery picture, with Ben's suppressed hiss in the background, and all the painful humanity underneath suppressed too, as nature commands when the sun is shining and all the world is gay. It is more superficial, and, so far as art is concerned, is on an infinitely low level, and yet it is truer to all those deep instinctive unities which art may sometimes ignore, but which nature never ignores.

There is one curious feature of personal resemblance in the lives of the two women thus placed before us which, considering their occupation, is noticeable enough, and which at the same time gives a very flat contradiction to one of the most popular of fallacies. Miss Austen was a born novelist, and Miss Mitford a teller of love-stories; they were neither of them recluses, nor in any way shut out from the world. The first was pretty and full of charm; the second, though not pretty, yet possessed all the attractions which a sprightly intelligence, and sweet temper, and most amiable disposition could give. And yet there is not the ghost of a romance belonging to either of them. If either loved or was beloved again, she must have done it in absolute secrecy, which is next to impossible. In the face of the popular notion that love is the chief occupation of a woman's life—or

let us say, at least, of a young woman's life—an idea which, no doubt, both of these women over and over again promulgated—stands this curious fact: Miss Austen and Miss Mitford were surrounded with other affections and occupations—their lives were full and showed no lack; and it would be hard to find any trace of that (let our readers pardon us the horrible word) sexual unrest and discontent which, at a later period, found a startling revelation in the works of Charlotte Brontë, and have since been repeated *ad nauseam* in many inferior pages—in the productions of either. Through all the voluminous correspondence just given to the public by Miss Mitford's executors, and through the pleasanter and more concentrated notes, and introductions, and reminiscences in which she herself gave the public such indication as pleased her of her own life, there is not a word that suggests a lover; there is not even a recollection such as calls the soft sigh, which is more pleasure than pain, and the tender smile of gratitude and etherialised vanity from an old lady's lips when a name or an allusion brings before her something which might have been. There is nothing in all Mary Mitford's muchutterance which conveys the faintest idea that anything could ever have been, except her devotion to her parents, her care of them as if she had been the parent and they the children, and her warm-hearted effusive regard for her friends. Perhaps, indeed, the want may be accounted for in her case by the mere fact of this strange transposition of nature which made her the real head of the little family, with all the care upon her head, and all the work to do, a combination of circumstances entirely unfavourable to love-making—if it were not that love-making is one of those perverse things which have a special tendency to produce themselves where their presence is embarrassing, and where they are

not wanted. But not even the fact that a love-story would have been very much in her way, and added greatly to her embarrassments, seems to have brought that climax of youthful experience to Miss Mitford. In Miss Austen's case there was nothing, so far as one can see, to hinder the natural romance. She had no overwhelming duties upon her head, nothing to bind her to maidenhood, no tragical necessities of any kind to damp her courage or restrain life in its ordinary course. Yet all her biographer can say on this interesting subject is—"Of Jane herself I know of no tale of love to relate." Mr Austen Leigh quotes from one of her reviewers the not unnatural idea that in depicting the hidden and tenacious love of one of her heroines, she was drawing from personal recollection, but only to assure us that "this conjecture was wide of the mark." She did not, indeed, pass through life," he adds, "without being the object of strong affection, and it is probable that she met with some whom she found attractive; but her taste was not easily satisfied, nor her heart to be lightly won. I have no reason to think that she ever felt any attachment by which the happiness of her life was at all affected."

We are thus resolutely denied a love-tale in both their lives, which is hard. Had they been married women whose romance had ended naturally in the commonplace way, the omission would have been less noteworthy; but there is a charm in the love which has never come to anything—the tender, pathetic, sweet recollection laid up in a virgin life, amid the faded rose-leaves and fallen flowers of youth—which is infinitely sweet and touching,—more touching than the successful and prosperous can ever be. This satisfaction, however, is, we repeat, denied us. There is no such soft secret in these two good, and pleasant, and beautiful lives. No man's existence could be more entirely

free from sentiment. All is honest, and moderate, and open as the day. If love is a woman's chief business, then here were two very sweet women who had no share in it. It is a want, but we have no right to complain, seeing that they did not shape their lives to please us, though they have shaped various other lines of existence in which the deficiency is supplied. Such a question, it is unnecessary to say, could not have been discussed by a contemporary; but the critic at this distance may be permitted to regret that there is not somewhere a faded bunch of violets, or some dead forget-me-not, to be thrown with the myrtle and the bay of their country's appreciation, upon these two maiden graves.

Miss Austen began her literary work at so early an age that its extreme skill and refinement, as well as the peculiar point of view from which she regarded the world, becomes more and more wonderful. It is a very difficult thing to realise how a brain of one-and-twenty could have identified such a family as the Bennets, such a character as Mr Collins, and could have willingly filled up her background with figures such as those of the female Bingleys, Wickham, Lady Catherine, and the rest. Nothing could be more lifelike, more utterly real. The household is not described, but rises vividly before us as if we had visited it yesterday, with all its rusticity and ignorance, its eager thirst for pleasure, and incapacity to perceive the bad taste and futility of its own efforts. The first wonder that occurs to us is how Jane and Elizabeth should have found a place in such a family. The eldest is all sweetness and grace and beauty; the second brightly intelligent, quick to perceive, and equally quick to take up false impressions, but clever and affectionate and honest to the highest degree; while every one else in the house is a study of absurdity and vulgarity of one sort or another.

Miss Austen had too much genius to fall into the vulgar error of making her heroes and heroines all perfect, and relieving them against a background of unalloyed villainy; but her actual conception of the world, as shown in her first completed work, is not much less elevated. The background is full, not of villains, but of fools, out of the midst of whom the heroes and heroines rise in all the glory of superior talents and more elevated character. The power that is spent in setting forth these fools—their endless variety—the different shapes in which conceit, and vanity, and selfishness, and vulgar ambition display themselves—the wonderful way in which they amalgamate and enhance each other, now and then rising into the successes of triumphant cunning, or sinking to pure folly once more,—is set before us with a skill which is quite marvellous. It is all so common—never rising above the level of ordinary life, leaving nothing (so think the uninstructed) to imagination or invention at all—and yet what other hand has ever been able to detach such a group from the obscure level of their ordinary fate? Mr Collins, for instance, who is the heir of Mr Bennet's entailed estate, and who, with a certain quaint sense of justice which enhances his self-importance, comes prepared to propose to one of the daughters, whom he is obliged to deprive of their inheritance. We give so much explanation, with a certain shame at the very possibility that Mr Collins should want a formal introduction to any portion of the British public; but yet it is true that the young ones are not so well up in the relationships of the Bennets as we could wish them to be. The sublime and undisturbed complacency of his arrival, when he compliments Mrs Bennet on having so fine a family of daughters, “and added that he did not doubt her seeing them all in time well disposed of in marriage,” is inimitable. “I am very sensible,

madam, of the hardship to my fair cousins," he says, "and could say much on the subject, but I am cautious of appearing forward and precipitate. But I can assure the young ladies that I come prepared to admire them. At present I will not say more, but perhaps when we are better acquainted——" When he receives Elizabeth's refusal to marry him with undisturbed complacency, attributing it to "your wish of increasing my love by suspense, according to the usual practice of elegant females," the situation rises to one of the most genuine comedy, and our only regret is that Mr Collins's adventures have never been adapted for the stage.

Miss Austen does not even let her victim escape her when he is married and has left the central scene. She pursues him to his home with the smile growing a little broader in her eyes. "Elizabeth was prepared to see him in all his glory; and she could not help fancying that in displaying the good proportions of his room, its aspect and its furniture, he addressed himself particularly to her, as if wishing to make her feel what she had lost in refusing him." His pompous assurance that "he has no hesitation in saying" that his goddess and patroness, Lady Catherine, will include his cousin in her invitations — his triumph when the party is asked to dinner — the pride with which he takes his seat at the foot of the table by her ladyship's command, looking "as if he felt that life could furnish nothing greater" — the "delighted alacrity" with which he carved and ate and praised — his game at cards with his august patroness after dinner, in which "he was employed in agreeing to everything her ladyship said, thanking her for every fish he won, and apologising if he thought he won too many," — are all so many touches which add perfection to the picture; and when we take our parting glance of Mr Collins, watching the country road from his "book-room," and hasten-

ing to inform his wife and her friends every time Miss De Burgh drives by in her phaeton, we feel that the power of consistent remorseless ridicule can no further go. There is not a moment's faltering, nor the ghost of an inclination on the part of the author to depart from her wonderful conception. He stands before us tall and grave and pompous, wrapt in a cloud of solemn vanity, servility, stupidity, and spitefulness, but without the faintest gleam of self-consciousness or suspicion of the ridiculous figure he cuts; and his author, with no pity in her heart, walks round and round him, giving here and there a skilful touch to bring out the picture. It is amazing in its unity and completeness — a picture perhaps unrivalled, certainly unsurpassed, in its way. It is, we repeat, cruel in its perfection.

Whether it is not too cruel to make the wife of this delightful Mr Collins share so completely in his creator's estimate of him is a different matter. "When Mr Collins could be forgotten there was really a great air of comfort throughout, and by Charlotte's evident enjoyment of it Elizabeth supposed he must be often forgotten" — the unflinching narrative goes on. "The room in which the ladies sat was backward, and Elizabeth at first had rather wondered that Charlotte should not prefer the dining-parlour for common use — it was a better-sized room and had a pleasanter aspect; but she soon saw that her friend had an excellent reason for what she did, for Mr Collins would undoubtedly have been much less in his own apartment had they sat in one equally lively; and she gave Charlotte credit for the arrangement." This is rather diabolical, it must be owned, and there is a calmness of acquiescence in the excellent Charlotte's arrangements which it takes all the reader's fortitude to stomach. It is possible that the very

youth of the author may have produced this final stroke of unexampled consistency; for youth is always more or less cruel, and is slow to acknowledge that even the most stupid and arrogant of mortals has his rights.

Mr Collins, however, is one of the most distinct and original portraits in the great gallery of fiction, and we accept him gladly as a real contribution to our knowledge of humankind; not a contribution certainly which will make us more in love with our fellow-creatures, but yet so lifelike, so perfect and complete, touched with so fine a wit and so keen a perception of the ridiculous, that the picture once seen remains a permanent possession. And when we are told that the Bennet family, with all its humours—the father who is so good and sensible, and yet such an unmitigated bear; the mother whom he despises and ridicules without hesitation, even to his heroine-daughters who accept his sarcastic comments as the most natural thing in the world; the stupid pompous Mary, the loud and noisy, heartless and shameless Lydia—are all drawn with an equally fine and delicate touch, we have not a word to say against it. We acknowledge its truth, and yet we rebel against this pitiless perfection of art. It shocks us as much as it could possibly have shocked Mr Darcy, to allow that these should be the immediate surroundings of the young woman whom we are called upon to take to our hearts. We blush for the daughter who blushes for her mother. We hate the lover who points out to her, even in self-defence, the vulgarities and follies of her family. A heroine must be superior, it is true, but not so superior as this; and it detracts ever so much from the high qualities of Elizabeth when we see how very ready she is to be moved by a sense of the inferiority of her mother and sisters, how ashamed she is of their ways, and how thankful to

think that her home will be at a distance from theirs.

Curiously enough, it would seem that Miss Austen herself felt for this same Elizabeth, and for her alone, the enthusiasm of a parent for a child. "I have got my own darling child from London," she writes to her sister, in a little flutter of pleasure and excitement. "Miss B—— dined with us on the very day of the book's coming, and in the evening we fairly set at it and read fully half the first volume to her, prefacing that having intelligence from Henry that such a book would soon appear, we had desired him to send it as soon as it came out; and I believe it passed with her unsuspected. She was amused, poor soul! *That* she could not help, you know, with two such people to lead the way, but she really does seem to admire Elizabeth. I must confess that I think her as delightful a creature as ever appeared in print, and how I shall be able to tolerate those who do not like *her* at least I do not know." In a later letter she adds—"Fanny's praise is very gratifying. My hopes were tolerably strong of her, but nothing like a certainty. Her liking Darcy and Elizabeth is enough; she might hate all the others if she would." This is as curious a piece of revelation as we know, and proves that the young woman who had just given so original a work to the world was in reality quite unaware of its real power, and had set her heart upon her hero and heroine like any schoolgirl. Our beloved Mr Collins, upon whom the spectator would be tempted to think a great deal of pains and some proportionate anxiety must have been expended, evidently goes for very little with his maker. It is her lovers she is thinking of, a commonplace pair enough, while we are full of her inimitable fools, who are not at all commonplace. This curious fact disorders our head a little, and makes us ponder and wonder whe-

ther our author is in reality the gentle cynic we have concluded her to be, or if she has produced all these marvels of selfish folly unawares, without knowing what she was doing, or meaning anything by it. Genius, however, goes a great deal deeper than conscious meaning, and has its own way, whatever may be the intentions of its owner; and we but smile at the novelist's strange delusion as we set aside Elizabeth and Darcy, the one a young woman very much addicted to making speeches, very pert often, fond of having the last word, and prone to hasty judgments, with really nothing but her prettiness and a certain sharp smartness of talk to recommend her; and the other a very ordinary young man, quite like hosts of other young men, with that appearance of outward pride and *hauteur* which is so captivating to the youthful feminine imagination, though it must be admitted that he possesses an extraordinary amount of candour and real humility of mind under this exterior. It is curious to realise what a shock it must have given to the feelings of the young novelist when she found how little her favourite pair had to do with the success of their own story, and how entirely her secondary characters, in their various and vivid originality, carried the day over her first.

'Sense and Sensibility,' which was really the first of Miss Austen's publications, as well as the first production of her youthful brain, has fewer salient points. There is nothing in it that can approach within a hundred miles of the perfection of Mr Collins. The Miss Steeles are simply vulgar and disagreeable, and we can scarcely be grateful for the vivid drawing of two persons whom we should be sorry ever to see again, and who really contribute nothing to our amusement, except so far as the fluttered sensibilities of the eldest in respect to "the Doctor" are concerned. No doubt the foolishness

of Sir John Middleton, who is so much afraid of being alone that the addition of two people to the population of London is a matter of delight to him; and of his wife, whose folly is concentrated in adoration of her children; and Mrs Palmer, who laughs loudly at her husband's insolence, and calls heaven and earth to witness how droll he is,—are amusing enough in their way; but Marianne's sensibility is not amusing, and we find it utterly impossible to take any interest in her selfish and high-flown wretchedness. Elinore's sense and self-restraint, though so much superior in a moral point of view, are scarcely more enlivening; and the heroes are about as weak specimens of the genus hero as one could desire to see: that, however, would be immaterial but for the absence of the rich background with its amazing multiplicity of character; for Shakespeare himself cannot always confer interest upon his *jeune premier*, the first gentleman of the story. The same criticism may be applied to 'Mansfield Park,' which is the least striking of the whole series, and though full of detached scenes, and still more of detached sentences, quite wonderful in their power of description, is dull and lengthy as a whole, and not agreeable.

But Miss Austen is herself again when she comes to the story of 'Emma,' which, next to 'Pride and Prejudice,' is, in our opinion, her best work. 'Emma' was the work of her mature mind. She was but one-and-twenty when she created Mr Collins, and surrounded the heroine whom she regarded with a girl's sympathy with so many repulsive and odious, yet perfectly-depicted, characters. Perhaps there was something of the inexperience and ignorance of youth in this device—the natural impulse to exalt the favourite, and win all the more love for her by encircling her with people whom it was impossible to love. Our novelist had left

her youth behind her, and her first home, and all the early conditions of her life, before Emma Woodhouse became her heroine; and there is a sweetness about this book which is not to be found in any of the others. There is scarcely one character in 'Pride and Prejudice' for whom we can feel any kindly sympathy, except, perhaps, Jane, the soft, pretty elder sister, who is little more than a shadow upon the full and vigorous landscape. But in 'Emma' there is nobody to be hated, which is a curious difference. Kindness has stole into the authoress's heart. The malicious, brilliant wit of youth has softened into a better understanding of the world. Mr Woodhouse is very trying in his invalidism, and we sympathise deeply with his visitors when the sweetbread and asparagus are sent away from their very lips as not cooked enough, and gruel, thin, but not too thin, is recommended in its place; but on the whole we like the courteous, kindly, troublesome old man: and Miss Bates, no doubt, is a person we would fly from in dismay did she live in our village; and had she belonged to the 'Pride and Prejudice' period, no doubt she would have been as detestable as she was amusing. But other lights have come to the maturer eyes, and the endless flutter of talk, the never-ending still-beginning monologue, the fussy, wordy, indiscreet, uninteresting old maid is lighted up with a soft halo from the heart within. Instead of impaling her on the end of her spear, like Mr Collins and Mrs Bennet, her author turns her outside in with an affectionate banter—a tender amusement which changes the whole aspect of the picture. It is not that the fun is less, or the keenness of insight into all the many manifestations of foolishness, but human sympathy has come in to sweeten the tale, and the brilliant intellect has found out, somehow, that all the laughable beings surrounding it—beings so amus-

ingly diverse in their inanity and unreason—are all the same mortal creatures, with souls and hearts within them. How Miss Austen came to find this out, we cannot tell. But it is pleasant to see that she had made the discovery. In 'Emma' everything has a softer touch. The sun shines as it never shone over the Bennets. This difference of atmosphere, indeed, is one of the most remarkable points in the change. We suppose we are told sometimes that it was a fine day in 'Pride and Prejudice,' but so far as our own perceptions go, the sky is very leaden, and there is little of the variety and vicissitude of nature in the monotonous landscape. We have a feeling that the Bennet girls were always muddy when they walked to Meriton, and that the wind, which blew in their faces and sometimes improved their complexions, was a damp ungenial sort of wind. But in 'Emma' the sun shines, and the playful soft breezes blow, and the heroine herself, with all her talents and quick-wittedness, is as absurd as heart could desire, and makes such mistakes as only a very clever girl, very *entêtée* and addicted to her own opinion, very wilful, and unreasonable, and hasty, and charming, could be expected to make. Miss Austen no longer believes in her, or gives her all the honours of heroine, as she did to her Elizabeth, but laughs tenderly at her *protégée*, and takes pleasure in teasing her, and pointing out all her innocent mistakes: one after another she falls into them, and scrambles out, and falls once more—and is overwhelmed with distress, and hates herself, and dries her eyes, and takes the bit in her teeth and is off again. We do not wonder that Mr Knightley finds it a dangerous amusement to watch, and try to guide her in her vagaries; and no doubt he had a hard time of it when he had finally secured her, in that period that comes after Miss Austen gives her up to him,

but, we don't doubt, liked it all the same.

And it is impossible to conceive a more perfect piece of village geography, a scene more absolutely real. Highbury, with Ford's shop in the High Street, and Miss Bates's rooms opposite, the parlour on the first floor, with windows from which you can see all that is going on, and, indeed, call to your friends down below, and hold conversations with them. And the vicarage lane at one end of the town, which is muddy, and where the young vicar from his study can see the young ladies passing on their way to their cottage pensioners, and has time to get his hat and umbrella and join them as they come back. And Hartfield, with its pretty shrubberies, standing well out of the town, a dignified conclusion for the walks of the ladies, whom Mr Woodhouse is so glad to see; and Randalls further on, with its genial sanguine master, and the happy, quiet, middle-aged wife, who has been Emma's governess, and is still "poor Miss Taylor" to Emma's father. Nothing could be more easy than to make a map of it, with indications where the London road strikes off, and by which turning Frank Churchill, on his tired horse, will come from Richmond. We know it as well as if we had lived there all our lives, and visited Miss Bates every other day.

Miss Austen's books did not secure her any sudden fame. They stole into notice so gradually and slowly, that even at her death they had not reached any great height of success. 'Northanger Abbey,' perhaps her prettiest story, as a story, and 'Persuasion,' which is very charming and full of delicate touches, though marked with the old imperfection which renders every character a fool except the heroic pair who hold their place in the foreground—were published only after her death, the MS. having been sold for ten pounds to a careless

country bookseller, from whom it was repurchased after the others had risen into fame. We are told that at her death all they had produced of money was but seven hundred pounds, and but a moderate modicum of praise. We cannot say we are in the least surprised at this fact; it is, we think, much more surprising that they should at length have climbed into the high place they now hold. To the general public, which loves to sympathise with the people it meets in fiction, to cry with them, and rejoice with them, and take a real interest in all their concerns, it is scarcely to be expected that books so calm and cold and keen, and making so little claim upon their sympathy, would ever be popular. "One of the ablest men of my acquaintance," says Mr Austen Leigh, "said in that kind of jest which has much earnest in it, that he had established it in his own mind as a new test of ability whether people could or could not appreciate Miss Austen's merits." The standard is real enough. A certain amount of culture and force of observation must be presupposed in any real independent admiration of these books. They are not the kind of books which catch the popular fancy at once without pleasing the critic—a power sometimes possessed by very imperfect and unsatisfactory performances; neither do they belong to that highest class of all which takes every variety of imagination by storm, and steps into favour without any probation. They are rather of the class which attracts the connoisseur, which charms the critical and literary mind, and which, by dint of persistency and iteration, is carried by the superior rank of readers into a half-real half-fictitious universality of applause. Perhaps the effort has been more successful in the case of Miss Austen than it has been with any other writer. Her works have become classic, and it is now the duty of every student of recent

English literature to be more or less acquainted with them. Authority was never better employed. "The best judges" have here, for once, done the office of an Academy, and laureated a writer whom the populace would not have been likely to laureate, but whom it has learned to recognise.

There is, however, one quaint instance of appreciation, recorded in the Memoir, which took place in her lifetime. The Prince-Regent admired Miss Austen's novels much, and sent her word through her doctor that she might go and see Carlton House with all its riches—a permission which we cannot but think must have been more honourable than delightful. She took the trouble to do it, however, and there met a Mr Clarke, librarian to his Royal Highness, who forthwith took her in hand. This gentleman, so far as can be judged by his letters, was a personage altogether after Miss Austen's heart, and who might have stepped out of one of her own books. He gives her permission unasked to dedicate one of her books to the Regent—a permission, by the way, which we do not clearly understand if she ever availed herself of; and, in addition, he proposes to her a subject for a book. "I also, dear madam," writes this ingenious gentleman, "wished to be allowed to ask you to delineate in some future work the habits of life and character and enthusiasm of a clergyman who should pass his time between the metropolis and the country, who should be something like Beattie's minstrel—

'Silent when glad, affectionate though shy,
And in his looks was most demurely sad;
And now he laughed aloud, though none knew why.'

Neither Goldsmith, nor La Fontaine in his '*Tableau de Famille*,' have, in my mind, quite delineated an English clergyman, at least of the present day — fond of and

entirely engaged in literature, no man's enemy but his own. Pray, dear madam, think of these things."

This tempting, not to say solemn, suggestion did not move the novelist, which must have seemed a strange fact to Mr Clarke. She answers him with admirable gravity, demurely setting herself forth as "the most unlearned and uninformed female who ever dared to be an authoress," and consequently quite incapable of "drawing such a clergyman as you gave the sketch of. . . . Such a man's conversation," she adds, "must at times be on subjects of science and philosophy, of which I know nothing, or at least be occasionally abundant in quotations and allusions which a woman who, like me, knows only her own mother tongue, and has read little in that, would be totally without the power of giving." How Miss Austen must have chuckled secretly over this wonderful suggestion! how deeply tempted she must have been to transfer the librarian himself, if not his "enthusiastic clergyman," to her canvas! But even this answer does not discourage Mr Clarke. Some time after he was appointed English secretary to Prince Leopold, who was then about to be married to the Princess Charlotte; and he does not lose a moment apparently in venturing a new suggestion, which was that "an historical romance illustrative of the august house of Cobourg would just now be very interesting." Mr Collins himself could not have done better. His clever correspondent exults over him; she gives him the gravest answers, and draws her victim out. She is quite inferior to the undertaking, she tells him with comic composure. Mr Austen Leigh, however, does not seem to see the fun, but gravely comments upon it, observing that Mr Clarke should have recollected the warning of the wise man, "Force not the current of the river," a conclusion scarcely less amusing than the preceding narra-

tive. It appears, however, that this was by no means a singular occurrence. Her friends, who could see plainly that Jane Austen was very much the same as other people, and not a person to be any way afraid of, were so kind as to give her many hints. Here is a sketch found among her papers of the sort of work she ought to have written had she followed their admirable suggestions :—

“ Plan of a novel according to hints from various quarters. The names of some of these advisers are written on the margin of the manuscript opposite to their respective suggestions.

“ Heroine to be the daughter of a clergyman, who, after having lived much in the world, had retired from it, and settled on a curacy, with a very small portion of his own. The most excellent man that can be imagined; perfect in character, temper, and manner, without the smallest drawback or peculiarity to prevent his being the most delightful companion to his daughter from one year's end to the other. Heroine faultless in character, beautiful in person, and possessing every possible accomplishment. Book to open with father and daughter conversing in long speeches, elegant language, and a tone of high serious sentiment. The father induced, at his daughter's earnest request, to relate to her the past events of his life. Narrative to reach through the greater part of the first volume; as, besides all the circumstances of his attachment to her mother, and their marriage, it will comprehend his going to sea as chaplain to a distinguished naval character about the court, and his going afterwards to court himself, which involved him in many interesting situations, concluding with his opinion of the benefits of tithes being done away with. . . . From this outset the story will proceed, and contain a striking variety of adventures. Father an exemplary parish priest, and devoted to literature, but heroine and father never above a fortnight in one place—he being driven from his curacy by the vile arts of some totally unprincipled and heartless young man, desperately in love with the heroine, and pursuing her with unrelenting passion. No sooner settled in one country of Europe than they are compelled to quit it, and retire to another, always making new

acquaintance, and always obliged to leave them. This will of course exhibit a wide variety of character. The scene will be for ever shifting from one set of people to another, but there will be no mixture,—all the good will be unexceptionable in every respect. There will be no foibles or weaknesses but with the wicked, who will be completely depraved and infamous—hardly a resemblance of humanity left in them. Early in her career the heroine must meet with the hero: all perfection, of course, and only prevented from paying his addresses to her by some excess of refinement. Wherever she goes somebody falls in love with her, and she receives repeated offers of marriage, which she refers wholly to her father, exceedingly angry that *he* should not be the first applied to. Often carried away by the anti-hero, but rescued either by her father or the hero. Often reduced to support herself and her father by her talents, and work for her bread; continually cheated and defrauded of her hire; worn down to a skeleton, and now and then starved to death. At last, hunted out of civilised society, denied the poor shelter of the humblest cottage, they are compelled to retreat into Kamakatcha, where the poor father, quite worn down, finding his end approaching, throws himself on the ground, and after four or five hours of tender advice and parental admonition to his miserable child, expires in a fine burst of literary enthusiasm, intermingled with invectives against the holders of tithes. Heroine inconsolable for some time, but afterwards crawls back towards her former country, having at least twenty narrow escapes of falling into the hands of anti-hero; and at last, in the very nick of time, turning a corner to avoid him, runs into the arms of the hero himself, who, having just shaken off the scruples which fettered him before, was at the very moment setting off in pursuit of her. The tenderest and completest *éclaircissement* takes place, and they are happily united. Throughout the whole work heroine to be in the most elegant society, and living in high style.”

Miss Mitford's literary fame stands upon a much slighter and less substantial basis than does that of Miss Austen. Indeed it is rather what she herself calls a literary life than any actual work which has made her so well known; and as a

literary life, her modest, kindly, long career is remarkable enough. A variety of pleasant sketches—chief among which is her sketch of herself and her flowery cottage—and descriptions of the pretty, luxuriant, leafy landscape, in which all her little pictures are enclosed, are the things which occur to our mind when we meet with her name; yet this pleasant, tranquil *paysagiste* began her life by the tumultuous triumphs of a dramatic author, and had the curious sensation of seeing Covent Garden filled to the doors, “so immense a house that you might have walked over the heads in the pit,” to listen to her tragedies. It is a strange episode in the most tranquil of lives. Her first attempt was in a play called ‘Julian,’ which we are curtly informed was successful, but which was assailed by a storm of criticism and speedily withdrawn. Her second success she thus describes, with a moderation and calmness which is remarkable after the excitement of such a moment, to her mother. The family were in great straits by this time, caused by Dr Mitford’s folly, and the success or failure of this play meant something like social life or death. The father and daughter were in town, trembling with a thousand apprehensions, up to the last moment; while the mother, not less anxious, waited in the pretty cottage in the wintry weather for the all-important news. The seriousness of the crisis, and the tender thoughtfulness of the writer, are shown on the very address of this letter. “Mrs Mitford—*good news*,” is written outside, that the very first glance might be reassuring:—

“I cannot suffer this parcel to go to you, my dearest mother, without writing a few lines to tell you of the complete success of my play. It was received, not merely with rapturous applause, but without the slightest symptom of disapprobation from beginning to end. We had not a single order in the house, so that from first to last the approbation was sincere and

general. William Harness and Mr Talfour are both quite satisfied with the whole affair, and my other friends are half-crazy. Mrs Trollope, between joy for my triumph and sympathy with the play, has cried herself half blind. I am, and have been, perfectly calm, and am merely tired with the great number of friends whom I have seen to-day. . . . God bless you, my dearest mother! Papa is quite well, and happier than you can imagine. He had really half a mind to go to you instead of writing, so much do both of us wish to share our happiness with you.”

“A real impression has been made, and a reputation of the highest order established,” she writes a little later to her friend Sir William Elford, complaining, however, playfully, that her second volume of “Our Village,” which had just been published, was likely to harm the tragedy, as “people will never allow anybody the power of doing two things well; and because it is admitted that I write playful prose, there be many who assume that I cannot write serious verse.” This is so true, that it is difficult even to imagine the comely face of our pleasant village historian growing pale with fright in the stage-box of a vast and crowded theatre, where “the white handkerchiefs are going continually,” and the vast audience weeps and thrills with tragic interest. The reader smiles, and feels disposed to doubt the narrative, even when it stands before him in all the integrity of print; for anything less tragic, less solemn, than the sweet-tempered round-about woman, to whom her flowers and her dogs and her village neighbours come so natural, could not be conceived. We do not recognise her in that grand accidental episode of her life, any more than we can sit down to read Foscarini (which all the same is perfectly readable). It is only when she is back again among her green lanes, among her geraniums, that we can identify our friend. But with such surroundings we know no English writer who is more supreme in her

gentle way. It is not a great way. There is no tragedy here, and such notes of pain as must come into every human strain, are struck so softly, and come so tenderly into the brighter measure, that they sound no harsher than a sigh. But this flowery, leafy, sunny Berks, with its streams and its woods, its cottages and its country-folks, its simple ways and rural quiet, where was there ever any English county more clearly put upon paper? How real and vivid was the impression it made (we remember) upon one little north-country imagination ever so many years ago! The scent of the violets, and the rustle of the great branched trees, and every detail of the landscape came before us as if we had been there—nay, more sweetly, more powerfully than if we had been there, as imagination is always more exquisite than fact. For that intense and well-remembered delight, it is fit that we should render Miss Mitford all the thanks that words can express. It was not perhaps so high an intellectual enjoyment as that which is given, to a mind capable of appreciating them, by Miss Austen's wonderful pictures, yet the recollection is sweeter to the heart.

Nothing could be more unlike the calm existence of the author of *'Pride and Prejudice'* than the anxious harassed life led by Mary Mitford. The fitful splendour which flickered about her youth had long disappeared. The little family, after various struggles to retain its position, had been driven out of the house which the father and mother had taken such pleasure in building, into a tiny cottage in a village street; and instead of the calm which so many people think—erroneously, in our opinion—to be essential for all mental work, it was among cares of the most depressing kind that Miss Mitford took up as a profession the work which she had fondly dallied with through all her earlier years. "I may in time make some-

thing of my poor, poor brains," she cries, pathetically, after her first dramatic failure. "I am now chained to a desk eight, ten, twelve hours a-day at mere drudgery. All my thoughts of writing are for hard money. All my correspondence is on hard business. Oh, pity me! pity me! My very mind is sinking under the fatigue and anxiety. . . . My dear father," she adds at a later period, with that pitiful endurance of the meanness of the men belonging to them, and anxious endeavours to give it the best possible aspect to the world, which some women are obliged to bear, "relying with a blessed sanguineness on my poor endeavours, has not, I believe, even inquired for a situation; and I do not press the matter, though I anxiously wish it, being willing to give one more trial to the theatre. If I could but get the assurance of earning for my dear father and mother a humble competence, I should be the happiest creature in the world. But for these dear ties I should never write another line, but go out in some situation as other destitute women do." This was her encouragement, poor soul, in undertaking what she calls "the boldest attempt ever made by woman"—a grand historical tragedy on the subject of Charles I. and Cromwell, a work which, after costing her infinite pains, was considered dangerous by the Lord Chamberlain, who refused his licence for its representation. She was at this time some years over thirty, at the height of a woman's powers, but not at the height of her hopes; for by that time life has generally begun to drag a little with the solitary. The only thing which mitigates our indignation against the father who, with "blessed sanguineness," could thus put himself upon his child's shoulders to be supported is, that he and the tenderer, sweeter mother filled her life at least with domestic happiness. "I hope," she

adds, with quick compunction after the plaint we have just quoted, "there is no want of duty in my wishing him to contribute his efforts with mine to our support." He was her first object all her life; and it is only by such a faint implied reproof as the above that she ever betrays to the outside world any sense of his sins against her. But her love for him was that of a mother rather than a daughter—an anxious, protecting, not unsuspicious affection. She writes to him with expressions of fondness which sound exaggerated, though they are apparently natural to her—but always with a latent sense that he is naughty, and that there will be various matters to forgive and forget when he comes back from his roving. A strange picture! One can see the two women at home in their anxious consultations—the mother and daughter, who think there is nobody like him in the world, and yet lay their kind heads together and wonder what he may be about—how he may be squandering their substance, what new burdens he may bring back to be made the best of. Yet what a handsome, fine, white-haired gentleman—a father to be proud of—does he appear in 'Our Village,' half seen in the sanctuary of his study, a magistrate and authority! Such a half-conscious, dear deception is common enough among women whom the world thinks comfortably blind to all their idol's defects, not knowing, like a stupid world as it is, that it is their very keenness of sight which produces that mist of tender illusion thus hung up and held up to dazzle other eyes.

The success of the tragedies seems to have been a fitful and not very profitable kind of success; but 'Our Village' went into fourteen editions in the course of a few years, and a fluctuating unsteady sort of prosperity visited the cottage. They set up a pony and chaise, and by times were in good

spirits; but it does not seem that Miss Mitford was ever fully reconciled to that stern necessity of labour, which to some people in this world is so great a grievance, and to some so great a blessing. She had been brought up in wealth and ease, for one thing, and had the feeling upon her, however concealed, that the money which ought to have maintained herself and her family had been squandered. Besides, she was one of the Northumberland Mitfords, allied to very great people indeed; and though there is no appearance of any contempt for her craft or its professors naturally arising in her own mind, it must have been a little hard to struggle against her father's feelings on the subject—feelings which remind us of one or two of Mr Dickens's characters,—of the dignified Mr Turveydrop and of Mr Bray in 'Nicholas Nickleby.' "My father," she writes, "very kind to me in many respects, very attentive if I'm ill, very solicitous that my garden should be nicely kept, that I should go out with him and be amused, is yet, so far as art, literature, and the drama are concerned, of a temper infinitely difficult to deal with. He hates and despises them and all their professors, looks on them with hatred and scorn, and is constantly taunting me with 'my friends' and 'my people,' as he calls them, reproaching me if I hold the slightest intercourse with either editor, artist, or actor, and treating with frank contempt every one not of a certain station in the county. . . . He ought to remember," pleads the poor authoress, not without a certain feeling of caste in her own person, and not sure that, after all, he may be right and she is demeaning herself, "that it is not for my own pleasure, but from a sense of duty, that I have been thrown in the way of such persons; and he should allow for the natural sympathy of similar pursuits, and the natural wish to

do the little that one so poor and so powerless can do to bring merit, and that of a very high order, into notice. It is one of the few alleviations of a destiny that is wearing down my health and mind and spirits and strength—a life spent in efforts beyond my powers, and which will end in the workhouse or in Bedlam as the body or mind shall sink first. He ought to feel this, but he does not."

There are many of these melancholy half-complaints in the latter part of her, or rather of her father's, life. Her destiny hangs very heavily upon her. She was not born, she feels, for such a fate; neither, she thinks, with natural generalising, was any woman ever intended to support a family—forgetting, as was also quite natural, how many women do. She goes over a little list of literary women, in her sad moments, to prove this unsatisfactory theory. Mrs Hofland is ill, Mrs Hall is ill, Miss Landon dead, and so on through a melancholy catalogue. As the master of the house grew older and more infirm, life grew ever harder and harder in the cottage at Three Mile Cross. He who had never been considerate became exacting, and in his demands upon her for personal tendance, forgot that she had to be the breadwinner as well as the nurse; while she, poor soul, worn to death with long hours of reading to him, nursing him, watching his every want, felt guilty and wretched to the bottom of her heart that she could not at the same time work for him, and carry on a double labour. For his sake she had given up a prospect opened to her by the kindness of some distant relatives, who proposed to her to live with them and be their companion—"not a dependant, but a daughter." They were people whom she liked and trusted, and the arrangement would have given her immediate ease and some permanent provision; but she gives it up with a sigh, in consideration of her father's

comfort. "To have left him *here* would have been impossible," she says; "and if Mr Ragget had (as I believe he would) given him a home at Odiam, the sacrifice of his old habits, his old friends, the blameless self-importance which results from his station as chairman of the Reading Bench, and his really influential position in the county, where we are much respected in spite of our poverty, would have been far too much to ask or to permit." This possibility, accordingly, was given up; but as the weary years stole on, and the old man, whose comforts must not be infringed whatever happened, descended lower and lower into that feebleness of age in which even the generous and amiable become exacting without knowing it, heavier and heavier clouds stole over the devoted daughter, and her weariness—or perhaps the fact that her life by this time was cheered by female friends to whom she could utter her heart more freely—forces her into speech. "After all, a wretched life is mine," she cries in her despair. "Health is gone; and if I can but last while my dear father requires me—if the little money we have can but last—then it would matter little how soon I too were released. . . . My life is only valuable, as being useful to him." And then come heartrending letters to the faithful friend, Mr Harness, who lived to plan and partially edit these volumes, but who is dead since their publication. He was her trustee, and held in his hands the last remnant of her mother's fortune, and not very long before it had been necessary for her to write him a sharp, brief note, strangely concentrated in its pain and shame, begging him to receive no applications for any part of this money except such as came from *herself*. But when the last stage of this long struggle comes, the poor soul, who can see no future beyond her father's death, and cares for no provision, nor anticipates any want of one

after that event, changes her tone; and she writes to him as follows, with a piteous pleading and remorseful self-accusation which goes to the reader's heart:—

"I have to entreat of you that you will suffer so much money as may be necessary to pay our debts to be taken from that in Mr Blandy's hands—say the two hundred pounds lately paid in. The necessity for this has arisen, partly from the infamous conduct of Messrs Finden, but chiefly from my dear father's state of health and spirits, which has made me little better than a nurse; and lastly, from my own want of strength, which has prevented my exerting myself as I ought to have done to remedy these disappointments. Nobody, to see me, would believe the wretched state of my health. Could you know all I have to undergo and suffer, you would rather wonder that I am alive, than that (joined to all I have to do with my dear father—reading to him, waiting upon him, playing at cribbage with him, and bearing, *alone*, the depression of a man once so strong and so active, and now so feeble)—you would rather wonder that I have lived through this winter, than that I have failed to provide the means of support for our little household.

"I am, however, rather better now, and feel that, if relieved from this debt, which weighs me down, I shall (as I have told my dear father that I must) rather seem to neglect him in the minor points of reading to him, &c., than again fail in working at my desk. Be assured that if you allow me to go to my writing with a clear mind, I shall not again be found wanting. It has been all my fault now, and if that fault be visited upon my father's white head, and he be sent to jail for my omissions, I should certainly not long remain to grieve over my sin, for such it is. It is a great trial, for my father has never, for the last four years, been two months without some attack of immediate danger, and the nursing and attending him are in themselves almost more than can be done by a person whose own state of health involves constant attention, and leaves her well-nigh exhausted and unnerved in mind and body. But I see now that a portion of the more fatiguing part of this attendance (say the reading aloud) must be relinquished, and, however grievous, it *shall* be so, for the more stringent duty of earning our daily bread. I will do this, and you, I am

sure, will enable me to go with a free mind to my task. I am sure that you will do so. It would be a most false and mistaken friendship for me which should induce you to hesitate, for my very heart would be broken if aught should befall his grey hairs. . . .

"My dear father has, years ago, been improvident; he still is irritable and difficult to live with; but he is a person of a thousand virtues—honest, faithful, just, and true, and kind. There are very, very few half so good in this mixed world. It is my fault that this money is needed—entirely my fault; and, if it be withheld, I am well assured of the consequences to both: law proceedings will be commenced; my dear father will be overthrown mind and body, and I shall never know another happy hour. I feel after this that you will not refuse me the kindness that I ask."

This letter, dated in July 1841, was followed in about six months by another in a similar strain:—

"I sit down with inexpressible reluctance to write to you, my ever dear and kind friend, because I well know that you will blame me for the occasion; but it must be said, and I can only entreat your indulgence and your sympathy. My poor father has passed this winter in a miserable state of health and spirits. His eyesight fails him now so completely that he cannot even read the leading articles in the newspapers. Accordingly, I have not only every day gone through the daily paper, debates and all, which forms a sort of necessity to one who has so long taken an interest in everything that passes, but, after that, I have read to him from dark till bedtime, and then have often (generally) sat at his bedside almost till morning, sometimes reading, sometimes answering letters as he slept, expecting the terrible attacks of cramp, three or four of a night, during which he gets out of bed to walk the room, unable to get in again without my assistance. I have been left no time for composition—neither time nor heart—so that we have spent money without earning any.

"What I have to ask of you, then, is to authorise Mr Blandy to withdraw sufficient money to set us clear with the world, with a few pounds to start with, and then I *must* prefer the greater duty to the less. I must so far neglect my dear father as to gain time for writing what may support us. The season is

coming on when he will be able to sit in the garden, and perhaps to see a few friends of an afternoon, and then this incessant reading will be less necessary to him. At all events, the thing must be done, and shall. It was a great weakness in me, a self-indulgence, not to do so before, for the fault is entirely mine. I believe, when these debts are paid, his own spirits will lose that terrible depression, broken only by excessive irritability, which has rendered this winter a scene of misery to himself and a trial to me.

"Do not fancy, my dear friend, that I cast the slightest blame on my dear father. The dejection and the violence belong to disease fully as much as any other symptom. If anybody be to blame, I am the person, for not having taken care that he should have no anxiety—nothing but age and infirmity—to bear. God forgive me for my want of energy! for suffering myself to be wholly engrossed by the easier duty of reading to him! I will not do so again. Once a-week he goes into Reading to the bench, and *then* he rallies, and nobody seeing him then could imagine what the trial is at home; and with nobody but myself, it has been some excuse for getting through the day and the night as best I could; but it shall be so no longer.

"Heaven bless you! do not refuse me this most urgent prayer, and do not think worse of me than you can help."

When the life of this man, who for so many years has been the tyrant and intolerable burden of his daughter's existence, comes to an end, the reader is disposed to turn away impatiently from her sorrow, and to feel a certain impulse of contradiction when among her tears she assures her friends that he must be happy, and that never man had more humble reason to anticipate heaven. If a man may be so selfish, so cruel, so devoid of natural justice or compassion, and yet be sure of adoring love all his life and heaven at the end, what meaning is there in the distinction between right and wrong? we ask ourselves. To Mr Harness, at least, there must have been a fierce and fine satisfaction in thus at last revealing to the world what manner of man he

really was whom Mary Mitford made an idol of, and of whom she has left so many fond pictures that we, deceived, might have admired him too. When he was gone she was very sad, as may be supposed: but gradually recovered out of her sadness and took comfort in her friends, and found at last, after the long struggles of life, a peaceful evening, no longer worn with overwork, or filled with petty anxieties. The book called '*Recollections of a Literary Life*,' which is not, so to speak, a book at all, but only a collection of her favourite scraps of poetry, from Percy's ballads down to sundry contemporary poets whom few people, we dare say, ever heard of, was put together in this time of rest. The book is a kind of an imposition to be given to the world under such a title, it must be allowed, but it is full of the most tender, charming little bits of autobiography and a certain serene sabbatical calm. She tells us how she goes out "almost daily" to "the charming green lane — the grassy, turfy, shady lane of which I have before made mention," attended by her little dog Fanchon, and her favourite little maid, with her books and writing-case. There, on "a certain green hillock, under down-hanging elms, . . . where we have partly found, partly scraped out for ourselves, a turfy seat and turfy table redolent of wild thyme, and a thousand fairy flowers, delicious in its coolness, its fragrance, and its repose," the genial, tender old woman placed herself, undisturbed, as it was meet she should be, by any care or trouble, taking the full enjoyment of the country so dear to her, and of the summer skies and summer air, and all the greenness that she loved; with her favourite poets by her side, and the pen which she had no longer any need to ply as a drudge, and which she loved too, dearly, when she ceased to be its vassal. This last picture, drawn by her own hand, is

the most pleasant conclusion that could be put to the much-troubled, much-toiling life. New ties she was too old to form, and there was no child to love her as she had loved ; but yet in a serene quiet, as of the evening, glad of the ease, and the stillness, and the dews ; glad too, perhaps, that all was so near over, and night at hand, and sleep—the weary soul rests and muses and smiles upon the world which has not given her much, and yet is full of friends to her. After some fifteen years of this soft, cheerful solitude, she died, sixty-six years old, without further pang or grief, with kind people about her, and servants who loved her ; but with everything that had been her very own gone before her into the other world.

We do not attempt to make any comparison between these two lives, nor are the two minds to be compared. Miss Austen was by much the greater artist, but the sweetness of the atmosphere about her humble contemporary was far above anything possible to the great novelist. In presence of the one we admire and wonder, watch-

ing the perfect work that by means so insignificant grows under her hands ; while with the other we do little more than breathe the fresh air and the flowers, and identify one little spot of actual soil not created, but described. Yet the two figures thus accidentally placed together—unlike in mind and in fortune, yet so like in some points of fact—cast a certain light upon each other, standing up each under “ the little span of sky and little lot of stars ” that belongs to her by nature ; women false to no instinct of womankind, as modest, as gentle, as little obtrusive as the humblest housewife. Let us hope that their portraits thus simultaneously reproduced may do something towards restoring the ancient standard which journalists tell us is so much altered in these days ; or may at least show that the possibility of work for women is not a thing of to-day, but had been found, and well done, with little fuss but tolerable success, before any of the present agitators of that much-discussed subject were born to throw light upon an ignorant world.

THE ANTAGONISM OF RACE AND COLOUR ; OR, WHITE, RED, BLACK,
AND YELLOW IN AMERICA.

IN our old and thickly-populated Europe, the several nationalities that possess the soil among them, whether they be called Goths or Latins, Celts or Saxons, Scandinavians or Tartars, Greeks or Turks, or an amalgamation, more or less complete, of some or all of them, form in reality but a portion of that great race, of Asiatic origin, which it is now the fashion to call the Caucasian. Among these nationalities the antipathy of race can scarcely be said to exist ; and whatever jealousy or prejudice of country may still be found among them, arises from political and religious rather than from ethnological causes. Some vulgar English may entertain a prejudice against the Irish, just as many vulgar and unreasonable Irish entertain a hatred of the "Sassenach." A similar prejudice once existed against Scotsmen, that first grew up in the reign of James I., and was fostered up to the time of George III. by such one-sided writers as Dr Samuel Johnson and others, and was aided more or less by the traditions of the stage. It also existed to a much greater degree against Dutchmen, whom it was the custom to call a nation of rogues, and against Frenchmen, whom in the middle of the last century it was sometimes held to be the duty of a true Englishman to hate, for the not very satisfactory reason put by Goldsmith into the mouth of the old soldier of Marlborough, "that they were all slaves, and wore wooden shoes." But the real antipathy or antagonism of race—whatever the feeling or the instinct may be called, which, with occasional exceptions on the part of individuals, forbids and prevents the union of the sexes—is almost wholly a matter of colour. The white or Caucasian race, more especially the Anglo-Saxon branch of

it, does not freely, or even commonly, intermarry with the red-skinned aborigines of America ; with the black-skinned Negroes, Caffres, or Hottentots of Africa ; or with the yellow-skinned Chinese, Japanese, or Malays. The same antipathy or antagonism exists among the races that are not white. Neither the Chinese nor the Red Indians will seek their mates among the Negroes ; and the Negroes themselves, though they look up to the whites for protection, and are not averse to marriage with them, have neither respect nor love for the red skins or the yellow. In Europe we see so little of people who are not of the pure Caucasian blood, that when persons of the red, the black, or the yellow races come among us, we look upon them with curiosity rather than repugnance, and hold out to them, when either commerce or courtesy requires, the right hand of good-fellowship. But when the man of white skin goes forth to remote regions, to subdue and form settlements, as in America, Australia, South Africa, and New Zealand, he goes as a superior being, assumes possession by the right, if not by the divinity, of his colour, and will listen to no terms on the part of the original possessors of the soil but absolute submission to his sovereign will. If they submit, they may live. If they prove troublesome, they must be subdued. If they put themselves into a state of permanent rebellion, they must be exterminated. This seems to be the law, above all other law, which the Caucasian race has imposed upon itself ; a law which has been somewhat relaxed in the case of the French and Spaniards, who were once the principal colonisers of the New World, but which has never been seriously relaxed by the An-

glo-Saxons, the Anglo-Celts, and their Teutonic cousins—who now between them form the great all-conquering, all-pervading race, that replenishes the waste places of the globe, and clears the way before it by the dispossession and subjection of the natives.

It is in the United States of America, where many problems, or what were once thought problems, of religion, politics, and the art of government, are either solved or will become solvable by the progress of time, that this question of the predominance of race assumes its largest proportion, and works itself out in the most remarkable manner. The British and the Americans are alike in this respect. It is in the blood, the bone, the flesh, and whole spirit of the people; one in this respect, though politically two. Wherever they go, they must be kings and lords over all men who have skins of a different colour from their own. When, as in the case of the Asiatic peoples, of an old civilisation, that already possess the soil and are too numerous to be dispossessed, this haughty people only establishes itself to trade, and not to colonise—it must govern, as the native kings, princes, rajahs, and rulers of India were not long in discovering; and as the Chinese and the Japanese, with a not unnatural jealousy, have been and still are somewhat apprehensive of discovering also. And what the British have done with the dark-skinned peoples of the East, we may be quite sure the Americans would have done if they had had the opportunity.

In landing upon the Atlantic shores of the North American continent, the Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Celtic emigrants—we use both terms, for the British people, in the proper acceptation of the phrase, are quite as much Celtic as Saxon, if they are not, as Messrs Pike and Nicholas, and other writers, have endeavoured to prove, even more Celtic than Saxon or Anglo-Saxon—

found themselves face to face with native tribes of a character, disposition, and race, very different from their own. The aborigines were inferior in all respects to the new-comers, though the new-comers did not arrive at the conclusion that they were so by any species of reasoning, inductive or other, but leaped to it without reasoning at all, having no more doubt of the fact than they had of the inferiority of the dog, the horse, the ox, or other animal created for their use. The aborigines, however, did not reciprocate the conviction; and having those nine points of the law which are included in actual possession, and all the instincts of humanity, on their side, treated the interlopers as dangerous visitors, who were either to be driven back into the ocean, or smitten, hip and thigh, in fierce and relentless warfare. Had the Red Indians been a docile and submissive people, who would have gently bowed their necks to the yoke, adopted the manners and speech of their conquerors, consented to be their hewers of wood and drawers of water—in fact, their agricultural or domestic slaves—there was no such antipathy of blood on the part of the invading Caucasians as would have led the superior race to constant warfare with the inferior. But the inferior people were as proud and haughty as the superior, and the consequence was war, daily, yearly, perpetually—war that could only be ended by the unqualified submission of the weaker party. This war has lasted for upwards of three centuries, and is not yet concluded. The unsubmissive red man has been treated for all that time by his next neighbours as if he were a wolf, to be 'hot down, hunted down, extirpated; though if, like the more docile man with a black epidermis, he would have consented to be made a slave, he would have been affectionately cared for. He has been driven by degrees from the sea-board of the New England

States, out of New York, out of Pennsylvania, out of the South, far away into the Great West, first beyond the Ohio river, where he made desperate fight within the memory of living men, who in their youth never retired to rest without danger to their scalps, and those of their wives and children. From the western bank of the Ohio they have been driven, with constantly diminishing numbers, towards the slopes of the Rocky Mountains. In vain the Federal Government exercised its authority to protect them. The arm of the law was weak, and the passions of the frontier men were strong. And on their part the Indians were stealthy, aggressive, and treacherous. Tardy measures, inaugurated by a distant Government, were of no avail in emergency, and many a savage fight between the two races was fought out, to the extermination of the weaker, before the Central Government was made formally aware that difficulties had arisen. The Indians did not wage honourable war. They were burglars and murderers rather than soldiers and patriots, and when caught red-handed were slain, not only without the slightest compunction, but very often with the most savage satisfaction. Philanthropists inveighed without avail against the proceedings of the settlers. Public opinion, more especially on the infested frontiers, was clearly against mercy ; and public writers, living in more settled and peaceable districts, whence the Indians had long since disappeared, were of opinion that interference by the central power was both unwise and useless, and that the matter should be left entirely in the hands of those who most severely felt the hardship and the danger of Indian contiguity. It was boldly asserted by Mr Parton in his 'Life of President Jackson,' who was chief magistrate from 1824 to 1832, "that the white settlers of the frontiers could not by any possibility live in peace with the Indians, and that the intense antipathy which was

excited in the mind of the white man, by living in proximity to the red man, was sure to degenerate into rancorous hostility. The white settler did not long continue to believe that an Indian had rights which the white man was bound to respect." A letter, which went the round of the American press, dated September 1859, from San Francisco, declared emphatically that "the Federal Government committed a great mistake at that time in not ordering a large military force to California, with orders to hunt and shoot down all the Indians from the Colorado to the Klamath ! This," says the writer, "would have been the cheapest method of managing the Indian affairs of California, and perhaps the most humane ! A weak sentimentalism may be horrified that civilised men should slaughter Indians as they would slaughter wolves ; but the strong-hearted clear-headed philanthropist will say that a general slaughter, for the clearly-expressed purpose of getting the friendless red men out of the way, is preferable to the system of slow heart-breakage and long-drawn torments now practised. It is a settled fact that every wild Indian in the State must die ; and the question is, whether it were better that he should be shot at once, or tortured through half-a-dozen years by ruin, disease, bereavement of all relatives and friends, and then finally shot because he has committed some 'outrage.' If I were the Indians, I should prefer being shot at once. I should enter a strong protest against this violation of all my natural rights by wicked, rude, uncontrolled white men—they being secure from punishment, and I hopeless of redress. It is supposed that ten years ago there were sixty thousand Indians in the State ; to-day there are not ten thousand."

Such language as this, atrocious as it must appear in England and Scotland, where we are not troubled with Red Indians, is by no means

exceptional, but nearly universal, at the present time, in all parts of the United States where the red man and the white man come together. Statesmen have not held this language—members of Congress have refrained from giving it utterance—it has never found its way into State papers, or been openly avowed,—but it has, nevertheless, been the common thought and expression of all white men of the Anglo-Saxon race ever since the discovery and colonisation of America, except among a small minority of Quakers and philanthropists. The great William Penn and the members of his amiable sect, from his day to ours, have always advocated a policy of peace with, and of justice towards, the Indians; but their humane policy has never prevailed so far as to influence the actions of the Federal Government and its agents on the frontier—partly on account of the savage atrocities committed, often without provocation, upon the families of the border settlers; partly on account of the natural incompatibility of good neighbourhood between a people exclusively addicted to the chase, and needing their aboriginal forests and large territories for their subsistence, and a people devoted to commerce and agriculture, and living together in towns and villages; and partly on account of the political necessity, real or supposed, that twists all laws, divine and human, to its own purposes, that led the central Government to look leniently upon the sharp practices or the gross injustice of the border whites, when with rum or brandy they enticed, or with bullets and swords they drove, the poor red men to destruction. Of course no civilised Government, such as that of the United States has ever been, or as that of the British colonies was before the outbreak of the War of Independence, ever avowed a policy of extermination, or openly acted upon it. On the contrary, the semblance of good faith and

amity was always maintained in the political relationship of the white race towards the red. When the British colonists to New England that departed in the Mayflower, and those under Lord Baltimore, General Oglethorpe, and others, peopled the regions farther south, and took possession of the soil that belonged to the aborigines, they found the different tribes of Indians in possession of different portions of the country as common hunting-ground belonging to the tribe, clan, or nation. Individual property in the soil was unknown, as it always is among savages. The British settlers, therefore, could not acquire legitimate individual rights from the Indians, because the Indians, as individuals, possessed no such rights themselves. To prevent frauds, and to legalise individual titles after the European fashion, the British Government, at a very early date, prohibited all its subjects from purchasing land from the Indians, and entered into a treaty with the chiefs of the native tribes, by which the latter bound themselves, when they wished to sell their hunting-grounds, to give the right of pre-emption to the British Crown. Thus it became an established principle that the Indians had only a right of collective possession in their own lands; that they could not sell any portion of them as private property to any individuals whatever; and that the Government alone had the privilege of purchasing their right of possession, and of converting the tenure of the lands into fee-simple. After the Revolution, and the Declaration of Independence, the Government of the United States claimed this right, as one of inheritance from the British Crown; and their whole transactions with the Indians have been founded on it since that event. Formerly, an Indian reserve meant a certain tract of land left in possession of an Indian tribe, on which no white man was allowed to settle. Not only

did the American Government prohibit the Indians from selling these reserves in the first colonised States of the seaboard to individuals, but it would not permit them even to divide their farms or lots among themselves, and convert them into freeholds. They were either to possess them in common, or give them up and remove to the west. Furthermore, it refused to allow the rights of American citizenship to an Indian, under any circumstances. Some of these stringent acts of injustice, as they must be called, were afterwards either abrogated altogether, or modified by consent and usage, in the several States that formed the original thirteen that successfully rebelled against Great Britain; for which abrogation there was the sufficient reason that the Indians, who thus remained in the heart of a country that every day became more and more populous with the dominant race, were too few in number to render it worth while to act exceptionally towards them. It became the policy of the Federal Government to encourage the removal of the Indians to the west, first of all to the prairies, and the central regions that border on the cis-Atlantic slopes of the Rocky Mountains. It was a long time before the Indians were finally expelled from the rich and prosperous lands of the original States, now teeming with population, wealth, and luxury; and the long history of every one of those States contains many a bloody page, recounting the fierce struggles of the Indians to be revenged upon the whites who were dispossessing them of their hunting-grounds, and of the equally fierce struggles of the whites to settle accounts with the savages by the short and easy method of extermination. The Seminole war, carried on by a famous Indian, known to the journalism of the time, and to history now, as Billy Bowlegs, taxed the patience and the strategy of the American

Government for nearly twenty years, within living memory; and General Sherman—without the prior aid of whose masterly soldiership and unprecedented daring and success in his famous flank-march through Georgia, General Grant, the actual President of the United States, would never have been able to strike the final blow against the Southern confederacy—has been busily engaged in keeping the peace of the far-western confines of civilisation against the marauding and murderous Indians of the prairies. General Grant, in his recently delivered message to Congress, aware from early professional experience as a soldier, and from later experience as a statesman, of the length, the cost, and the cruelty of Indian wars, expressed his anxiety to inaugurate a better system, or rather to extend the old system of treating the Indians, by placing them in reserves. He says:—

“The Quakers are well known as having lived in peace with Indians while the people of other sects have been engaged in quarrels with them: they oppose war, and deal fairly. The President has consequently given them the management of a few reservations, with most satisfactory results. General Grant holds that any system looking to the extinction of the Indian race is too horrible to be considered. He sees no substitute except in placing all Indians on large reservations as rapidly as possible, and giving them absolute protection there; and adds that as soon as they should be fitted for it, they should be induced to take these lands severally, and set up territorial governments for themselves.”

The attempt is well meant, and the United States have sufficient territory in a state of wilderness to have enough and to spare to allow the poor Indian to try the experiment whether he can be permanently weaned from the habits of the savage, and taught to live as a Christian, and a civilised citizen of a free state. The result of the contest is one of time, and may not be reached in our day and

generation, but it needs no great amount of political forethought to predict that it can be no other than the extermination of the Indians, or their submission and removal to the Indian reserves, which have been and are to be set apart for the tribes by the Federal Government. The existing reserve, bounded on the south by Texas, on the north by Kansas, on the east by Arkansas, and on the west by the yet unsettled or very sparsely peopled territory of New Mexico, is a country almost as large as Great Britain, and vastly more fertile. When the last decennial census of the United States was taken in 1860, the total Indian population living in peace within its own limits, and unmolested by the whites, was but 65,680, or scarcely one-fifth of the population of the single city of Boston in Massachusetts. The total number of Indians in other States and territories of the Union was 228,750—in all, but 294,431; a number so small as to be less than the population of the city of Brooklyn, which is a mere suburb of the great city of New York. A few Indians still linger in the remoter parts of the older States—so few as to be harmless by their numbers, and to be no more in the way of the agricultural population than the gipsies are in England—gipsies, whom they very much resemble in personal appearance, in predatory habits, and in the pretence of fortune-telling. In the state of New York there were in 1860, 140 of them; in Georgia, 38; in Ohio, 30; and in Massachusetts, 32. The census was taken prior to the great civil war, and the consequent abolition of slavery, and elicited the somewhat singular fact in connection with the Indians in the reserved territory west of Arkansas, that they had learned to imitate their white neighbours in the Southern States, and, like them, assumed a superiority of race, by holding negroes in slavery. From the tabulated statement presented to Congress, it

appeared that the Choctaw nation in the Indian reserve held among them no less than 2297 negro slaves, distributed among 385 owners; the Cherokee nation, 2504, owned by 384 masters; the Creeks, 1661, owned by 267; and the Chickasaws, 917, owned by 118. The ten largest Cherokee slave-owners possessed each about 64 negroes, male and female; but the largest proprietor was a Choctaw, possessing 227. According to Mr Kennedy's Preliminary Report on the Census, these tribes "presented an advanced state of civilisation, and some of them had attained to a condition of wealth, comfort, and refinement." They formed, however, but a small proportion of the Indian tribes within the dominion of the United States. The remainder, with the few exceptions of the straggling gipsy-like hordes that cling to the older States, whence they are gradually disappearing, exist in a state of chronic warfare against the white man, and against the civilisation of which the white man is alike the emblem and the agent. They wage a losing battle. The farmstead continually encroaches upon the wilderness. The man who works encroaches upon the man who hunts; and the man who hunts, after a fight more or less vindictive and protracted, succumbs to inevitable fate, and to the right arm of the stronger and the wiser, though, perhaps, by far the more unscrupulous, of the two. In the prose of an American orator, that has all the rhythm and dignity of poetry, the Red Man "slowly and sadly climbs the western mountains, and reads his doom in the departing sun." Yet even here, the last hope of security in the hunting-grounds fails them. They are not only pursued to the Rocky Mountains by the aggressive forces of over-peopled New England and other Atlantic States, but by the countless swarms of Irish, German, and other immigrants from Europe; and if they cross the ridge, and

descend into the plains that slope towards the Pacific, in California, Oregon, and Columbia, they find that the all-conquering white man is there before them, and that they have an enemy in front as fierce and unrelenting as him they left behind. Whatever hope there is for the doomed people is in the reserve appropriated to them by the grant of the United States. Thither, if they will go, they may find rest and security; but not even rest and security, if they will not, like their brothers the Choctaws, the Cherokees, and the Creeks, consent to cultivate the soil and apply themselves to the useful arts. A nation of hunters cannot long remain amid teeming nations of farmers and manufacturers; and in the contests that arise from their contact the wild huntsman disappears, and the land remains to him who will patiently plough it and reap its harvests. This has been the course of events in Australia, even more rapidly than in America. This also will be, unless all appearances are deceptive, the course of events in New Zealand, in South Africa, and in every part of the globe where the proud white man finds himself in antagonism of interest with men of any other colour.

The antipathy—there never was any real antagonism—between the white man and the black in America was never so fierce as that between the white and the red. The black man was docile and useful, and when he was first forcibly deported into America from his native Africa, he was brought as the lawful spoil of the wars that were incessantly raging among the chiefs and petty kings of his own people, and accepted the doom of slavery with as much unconcern as he would have imposed it had he been the stronger party. It has been the custom among Americans, and more especially among the bitter Puritans of the “nigger-

worshipping” party (the phrase is native American, not English), to lay all the fault of negro slavery at the door of the British Government, and to assert that if the American colonists had originally been left to themselves in this matter, they never would have enslaved the negroes, or people of any other colour. But this assertion is idle and unfounded. Neither the people of Great Britain nor of the colonies, nor of France, nor of Spain, nor any other civilised nation existing at the time when the overflow of the great European swarm first settled upon the fertile and apparently inexhaustible land of the North and South American continents, thought that slavery was a sin, or anything else but right, natural, and proper. The very Puritans that landed in the Mayflower deemed slavery to be a divine institution, and enslaved the women and children of the Indians whom they overthrew in battle, notwithstanding a provision in the famous Blue Laws of Connecticut, forbidding either the holding or the selling of negro slaves. The Spaniards first imported negro slaves into America about the year 1503; and by the year 1550, or thereabouts, the importation had been so great into the West India Islands that the aboriginal Caribs had wellnigh disappeared, and the cultivation of the prolific soil was almost wholly conducted by Africans and a few white overseers. Negroes were first imported into Virginia in 1619, and into Massachusetts in 1646—the first slave-ship ever fitted out in the British colonies having sailed from Boston, in that State. But the growth of the colonies in those days of comparatively difficult and uncertain intercourse was not rapid, and no great number of slaves was required to till the narrow slips of country on the Atlantic coast, which then formed what long continued to be called “The Plantations.” Up to so late a period in the history of slavery as the year

1790—when the United States had long been in the enjoyment of their well-won independence—the number of slaves in the Union, both in the North and the South, only amounted to 700,000. In the year 1774, before their independence was secured, the plucky little republic of Rhode Island—the smallest in area, but by no means the smallest in public spirit and intelligence, in the United States—not only prohibited the slave-trade with Africa, but in the following year took the initiative in emancipation, by enacting that all children born thereafter of slave-mothers resident within its limits should be free. The contiguous republic of Massachusetts abolished both slavery and the slave-trade by her Bill of Rights in 1780. In the same year, Pennsylvania, where the Quaker interest was at the time paramount, did the same. Connecticut prohibited the slave-trade in 1784, and declared that all children of slave-mothers born within its territory after the 1st of March in that year should be free. Virginia, though it did not abolish slavery, prohibited the slave-trade in 1778, and Maryland in 1783. New Hampshire abolished slavery in 1792; New York in 1783; and New Jersey, contiguous to New York, only in 1820. It was not until 1808 that the slave-trade was finally abolished throughout the whole Union, and slavery itself left to live or die as the several States interested in its continuance might determine. Great credit has invariably been taken to themselves by the New England and other Northern States which abolished slavery at this comparatively early period, for the magnanimous spirit and truly Christian charity which they displayed in thus placing themselves, as it were, in the vanguard of the world's progress. But the credit is not altogether due. Throughout all those regions the white man can perform every kind of agricultural labour, and are not

disabled, as at the south, by the extreme heat of summer, or the malaria of the swamp and jungle, and the unwholesomeness of the low-lying alluvial lands best fitted for the cultivation of sugar, rice, and cotton. Negro labour, too—and more especially negro slave-labour—it should be remembered, is the most costly of all labour; and as the white men in the cold northern parts of the Union were quite capable of field-work in all seasons, and did it not only better but more cheaply than the negro, whether he were free or a slave, negro labour, especially in agriculture, was gradually dispensed with. And if the labour of the free negro is costly on account of the inefficiency of the labour, that of the negro slave is more costly still, inasmuch as the slave-owner is burdened with his subsistence during the non-labouring ages of his life—from birth to adolescence, and during the years of his decay and decrepitude, at whatever age these calamities may come upon him, until his final death and burial. The New-Englanders, New-Yorkers, Pennsylvanians, and others in similar circumstances of climate and production, were not long in discovering that white labour was best, and that negro slavery did not pay. When fully aware of the fact, they set themselves right with nature and with political and social economy. Many influential people in the legislatures of those States, or who, not being legislators, had influence enough to ascertain what was coming, took advantage of the priority of intelligence to deport their able-bodied slaves to the South before the acts of emancipation were passed; so that when emancipation was publicly decreed, there were few negroes left behind to be emancipated except the aged and the infirm.

In the Northern States, after emancipation, and up to the time of the great civil war, the negroes and coloured people had but a hard time of it. They were men and

women, it is true, and not chattels. They could not be bought and sold, but they could be denied political rights and social equality, and they could be trodden down into the condition of Pariahs. In some of the Northern States they could not serve as jurymen—in none were they eligible to any State office of trust and emolument; and if in some, such as Massachusetts, they were allowed the privilege of a vote, the privilege was encumbered by the qualification of a certain amount of property, and of contribution to the public burdens, not exacted from the whites. They were not allowed to appear in the theatres, in the churches, in the street omnibuses and cars, or to associate on terms of equality with the dominant race. If the coloured people accepted the conditions, they were not only not molested, but were patronised and encouraged in the pursuits to which they betook themselves for subsistence. But if they asserted their social equality (their legal equality was totally out of the question), public opinion came down upon them with relentless force, and taught them, by the judgment of Mr Justice Lynch, that rough-and-ready chief magistrate of the streets and the gutters, to know their proper place, and not presume either to laugh, to pray, to eat or to drink, in the presence of their white superiors. Even the half-breeds or mulattoes were trodden into the same social inferiority as the full-blooded negroes. A short time before the civil war, a coloured but not very black clergyman, who had taken the degree of Doctor of Divinity at the University of Heidelberg—in default of the possibility of acquiring a diploma from any university of America—who had preached in London, and been hospitably entertained by the Exeter Hall section of the British aristocracy,—was forcibly ejected in New York from a street car, which he had entered on his return from Europe. This gentleman (the

Rev. Dr Pendleton) was only half a negro, being the son of a white father; and was, moreover, a shareholder to the extent of ten thousand dollars (£2000) in the company by whose cars he thought himself entitled to travel—in right of his pocket if not of his skin—but he had to submit to expulsion with what grace he might, and try his remedy, if he had any, in a court of law. A white man in America may look with admiration upon a comely black woman, and other white men will wonder at the depravity of his taste, and think no further of the matter; but if a black man, the civil war and its results notwithstanding, dare so much as to ogle a white girl, he does it at the risk of his life if there are white spectators of his offence, or if the aggrieved girl take her relations or friends of her own colour into her confidence to avenge the insult. The white man who commits a rape is tried in due form before the court; but the black who commits the same crime, if his victim be a white woman, undergoes no trial, but is hung at the nearest lamp-post by the sentence of the mob. In the Western States, when white women are so treasonable to their colour as to marry black men, however respectable or wealthy their husbands may be, the ban and the anathema of the white race are upon them—happy if they escape insult as they pass along the streets, and most commonly hooted out of society, and expelled from the city or the State which they are thought to have contaminated.

In the Northern States the negroes have not only had to struggle against the hardships of the social inferiority imposed upon them, but against a climate which is not favourable to the health and fecundity of their race. During the seventy years from 1790 to 1860, the number of free coloured people in all the States, North and South, rose from 59,466 to

482,123, partly by natural increase, and partly by the emancipation of the slaves in the North and West. In later years, and until the results of the civil war had set the coloured people free, the increase of the free negroes, not being aided by emancipation, and only by such chance fugitives as escaped from the South, was exceedingly slow, and in some States there was either no increase or a positive diminution, in consequence of the deaths exceeding the births in number. Upon this point Mr Kennedy, in his Preliminary Report on the Census of 1860, says :—

“ In the interval from 1850 to 1860, the total free coloured population of the United States increased from 434,449 to 488,005, or at the rate of 12.33 per cent in ten years, showing an annual increase of one per cent. This result includes the number of slaves liberated and those who have escaped from their owners, together with the natural increase. In the same decade the slave population, omitting those of the Indian tribes west of Arkansas, increased 23.39 per cent; and the white population 37.97 per cent, which rates exceed that of the free coloured by twofold and threefold or fourfold respectively. Inversely, these comparisons imply an excessive mortality among the free coloured, which is particularly evident in the large cities. Thus, in Boston, during the five years ending with 1859, the city registrar observes: ‘ The number of coloured births was one less than the number of marriages, and the deaths exceeded the births in the proportion of nearly two to one.’ In Providence, where a very correct registry has been in operation, under the superintendence of Dr Snow, the deaths are one in twenty-four of the coloured; and in Philadelphia, during the last six months of the census year, the new city registration gives 148 births against 306 deaths among the free coloured. Taking town and country together, however, the results are more favourable. In the State registries of Rhode Island and Connecticut, where the distinction of colour has been specified, the yearly deaths of the blacks and mulattoes have generally, though not uniformly, exceeded the yearly births,—a high rate of mortality, chiefly ascribed to consumption and other diseases of the respiratory system.”

In the South—where the climate agreed with the negro constitution, and where, as slaves, they were well fed, even if severely worked—the race increased very rapidly. From the year 1810—two years after the foreign slave trade had been abolished, and there were no further importations from Africa to the year 1860—the negroes in slavery had increased from 1,191,364 to 3,953,587, or to nearly four millions. In the South, during all these years, there was neither antipathy nor antagonism between the white race and the black. The negroes conceded their social, their legal, and their human inferiority, and there was not only peace, but a certain amount of friendship and regard between them and their masters. But if an individual negro asserted his equality, war broke out immediately, and the weaker—as is the necessity of this physical world—went to the wall. As regards the female negroes and the aged of both sexes, there was throughout the whole of the Southern slaveholding States a degree of affection exhibited by the white towards the black such as is seldom or never seen in white households, where the servants are of the same colour as their masters and mistresses. The black nurse who had attended upon young “master” or young “missus” in infancy and childhood, has commonly become the absolute ruler of both young master and young missus when they had arrived at maturity, and gave the law, like to that of the Medes and Persians, in all matters pertaining to their health and comfort when at home. The sway or the tyranny was that of affection, and its burden was light, and was accepted, partly with a sense of amusement, but in a far greater degree with a sense of gratitude to the kindly creatures whom not even slavery itself could divest of some of the noblest attributes of humanity. How long the institution of slavery could have main-

tained itself, or been maintained, by brute force in the United States, if the civil war had not intervened, and cut the Gordian knot of a problem that seemed at one time to defy all peaceable solution, none can now tell; though there is great reason to believe that the Southern States, if they had been left to themselves to deal with the slave question as the Northern States had dealt with it, by their own action, and at their own time, would have inaugurated a system of gradual emancipation, to take effect before the slaves became too many, and consequently too costly, to be maintained on the old and extravagant footing. So little did the North and the Federal Government under Mr Lincoln imagine for many months after the outbreak of the civil war that it was possible or desirable to emancipate the slaves at one blow, that Mr Lincoln in 1862, when the war had almost reached its utmost range, and its most intense bitterness, proposed for the adoption of Congress a resolution amendatory of the Constitution, with the object of procuring the gradual and compensated abolition of slavery on or before the 1st of January 1900. The progress of time and the fortune of war decided against the consideration of Mr Lincoln's far-sighted policy; and when at last he launched his "Bull," as he himself called it, against slavery, and decreed, by the authority of the United States, that all slaves within its States and territories should thenceforth and for ever after be free, he did this, not from motives of philanthropy or Christianity, or overpowering hatred of slavery as an institution, other than an aggressive one, that threatened to invade the North, but solely as a war measure, and on the ground, often taken in minor matters by meaner persons, that all is fair in love and war. The expectation was, that the negroes would rise in insurrection against their masters as soon

as the glorious gift of freedom was offered to them as the recompense of their valour. But the negroes did nothing of the kind. They had neither the spirit nor the wish to set themselves against their masters, and had learned, from such public opinion existent among the whites as found utterance among them, to dislike the Northerners, or "the Yankees," quite as much as their owners. During the war, numbers of mulattoes, who had more enterprise and intelligence than their unmixed brothers of the pure black race, acted as spies and as guides to the Northern armies; but as such the full-blooded negroes kept aloof, or if they expressed and felt any sympathy, it was for their masters, whom they considered to be wrongfully invaded. Both parties to the quarrel misunderstood the negro. The North overvalued his assistance, and the South underrated it. But the mistake made by the South was the greatest of all. In the pride of their white blood, the Southern people scorned to owe their independence to the hands of their bondsmen, though there can be little doubt that if they had taken the negroes into their confidence, and promised every black soldier who joined the Confederate army, and served faithfully to the conclusion of the war, his freedom, together with that of his wife and family, they would have had an efficient black army, that might have been led to many a victory by white generals, and numbered as many fighting men as the North secured among the Irish and the Germans by the bribe of bounty-money. But on this point the Southern leaders were obstinate, and their obstinacy was fatal—an obstinacy all the more remarkable in view of the undoubted fact that, had the South proclaimed even the partial emancipation of the negro race, the sympathy of the anti-slavery party in England and France, that ran so strongly for

the Northern cause, would have sensibly diminished; and the last great argument against the recognition of the Confederacy as a confederacy of which slavery was the corner-stone, would have ceased to be of any weight in the councils of civilisation.

The "freedmen" or the "coloured citizens," as the former slaves in the Southern States are sometimes called, have now for four years been face to face with their old masters, and some of them—principally, however, among the mulattoes—have been elected by universal suffrage to political and other offices of trust and emolument. Though many of these have expressed a willingness to work for wages, it still remains a question for the future to decide on what terms the two races of white and black will consent to dwell together. The negro is no longer a contented man. He is a free citizen, it is true—free to starve if he chooses, and free also to assert and claim a legal equality with the man who formerly owned him. But if he be free to assert his social equality, he is not free to enforce it; for no laws that any legislature can frame, or any judge decree, can regulate the social intercourse of society, or compel a white man to associate on friendly terms with a negro, or admit him to the hospitalities of his table and his family circle. And equality does not now, and never did, exist at the North, and will never be tolerated either at the North or the South. There are already symptoms that the Southern negroes are quite aware of the fact, and partially, if not wholly, reconciled to it, as one that exists in white human nature, and against which it is useless, and might be suicidal, for black human nature to rebel. They see that their only chance of being allowed to live in peace among the whites lies in the subordination to the race that deems itself superior, and will manifest its superiority

socially if not legally. Hitherto the Northern emissaries and functionaries who have flocked into the South on the chances of making fortunes, bearing with them the carpet-bags containing their whole available property (hence their popular name of "carpet-baggers"), have for political purposes endeavoured, and often successfully, to humble the white man, and teach the black to assume the airs of social equality. The result has been anything but favourable to the permanent amity of the two races. But time, that smooths away so many roughnesses, will doubtless soften the hostility of the carpet-baggers if they remain in the South, and desire to associate with people of their own colour. They will become imbued, *volens volens*, with the opinions of the society around them—a society in which the ladies, there as in all other civilised portions of the earth, reign unchallenged and supreme. The great danger, however, that most besets the negro race lies in those portions of the South—and they are extensive as well as productive—in which the climate offers no obstacle to the employment of white men in agricultural labour. In those regions white competition will ultimately become too strong for them; and if the negroes are too numerous to procure work or to be maintained as paupers at the expense of the community, they will inevitably be compelled to emigrate to more favourable regions, or be reduced to perish of famine and the diseases which accompany it. Freedom as yet has proved but a poor boon to the great bulk of the negroes; and Americans, both of the North and the South, who have devoted attention to the subject, are of opinion that the census returns of the decennial period from 1860 to 1870 will show, so far as the whole Union is concerned, a great diminution of the negro race as compared with the previous period from 1850 to 1860—and in the South, more particularly, a diminution of at least

a million. Small-pox, overcrowding, intemperance, and hopeless poverty have been at work among them since the pen of Mr Lincoln and the fortunes of war made them masters of their own destiny ; and child-murder, a crime utterly unknown and without motive among the mothers in the days of slavery, has so greatly increased as to have attracted the notice of the whole Southern people.

The time seems to be coming when the great and rich republic of the United States will have to bethink itself whether it has done its whole duty by the black man in giving him liberty and a vote ; and whether the negroes, like the Red Indians, might not advantageously be set apart in reserves, to govern themselves, under the protection of the Federal Government. The sea-islands on the low alluvial coasts of the Atlantic between Virginia and Florida, which yield the finest long-staple cotton in the world, but are wholly uninhabitable by the white people during the summer months, are particularly well adapted for settlement and cultivation by the negroes. The malaria that is fatal to the Caucasian has no effect upon the African ; and these islands, if parcelled out in cotton plantations among negro proprietors, after compensation to present owners unable to reside in them except during the short winter, might maintain a very large proportion of the now aimless, destitute, almost helpless freedmen, who swarm in every great city between Washington and New Orleans. Texas, a State as large as France—with a population of somewhat less than half a million by the census of 1860, and that possibly will be found to contain three-quarters of a million by the census of 1870—might be divided into three or four States of the Union, of which

one might be set apart as a reserve, on which the negroes, under the most favourable auspices, might prove to the world, if the fact be possible, that they are as fairly amenable to all the influences of civilisation as the Caucasians. It is evident that, as a labourer, the free negro is not in much request at the South, on the three grounds that his labour is unskilful, uncertain, and costly. Indolence—resignation to the *dolce far niente*—contentedness with a merely animal existence—thoughtlessness and heedlessness of the morrow, and all that it may bring forth—and the want of guidance and direction, are the faults of the negro character ; and, worse than all, they are faults so deeply engrained as to appear all but ineradicable. A race like this is not well suited—leaving colour out of the question—to the requirements of the United States. America, and all those portions of it that are not possessed by the Spaniards, and the mixed race of Spaniards and Indians that encumber Mexico and the beautiful regions still farther south, is pre-eminently the land of hard work. No people, not even the British, labour so hard as the Americans ; and for the idle man—black, white, red, or yellow—there is neither room nor tolerance. The popular saying, “Root, hog—or die !” tersely, if roughly, expresses the American feeling, that he who will not work cannot be allowed to live ; and if the chronic laziness of the negroes, unpurged by exertion by the strong hand of authority that formerly kept them in accord with the civilisation around them, causes their degeneration into hopeless pauperism—the antagonism between the industrious whites and the idle blacks will take a severer form than it has ever yet assumed in American history.*

* The religious negroes, and negroes pretending to be religious, but who are far more pagan than either they or their Northern friends imagine, sometimes assume a superiority to the white race. One of their hymns reaches us, as we write, from

The short and as yet unfavourable trial that has been made of the freed negro as a labourer since the return of peace, has led the Southern planters, or such of them as have not been utterly ruined by the war, to turn their attention to the importation of coolie-labour—a fact of itself sufficient to show how precarious and unsatisfactory is the position of the African race, and to impress upon the minds of the leading statesmen of the Union the necessity of looking at the negro question fully and fairly. Liberty, no doubt, is sweet, alike to the white and the black; but possibly the poor blacks, if the worst comes to the worst, and their numbers dwindle and dwine upon the teeming soil which they were once compelled to cultivate, with rich plenty as their reward, may come to the conclusion that life itself is something even sweeter than liberty; and that the paternal government which gave them the one boon, ought at least to provide them with the means of maintaining the other. This problem, difficult as it may be, ought not to prove insoluble to a people with such immense territorial resources as the United States, and with such a character for philanthropy to lose as the Federal Government acquired by its abolition of slavery. The great impediment in the way, at least for the present, lies in the political necessities of the party that elected Mr Lincoln to the chief magistracy—that carried on the fratricidal war to its

bitter end—that placed General Grant in Mr Lincoln's chair—and that still aspires to rule the Union. To this party the negro vote in the Southern States is absolutely essential for the maintenance of its majority in the Federal Legislature; and it will, therefore, not very willingly inaugurate or even support a project for the deportation of so many useful pawns on the political chessboard to any single territory, where their votes, instead of being spread over eleven States, would be concentrated into one. But as the problem, though a political one now, may become a social one hereafter, and as the negroes themselves may possibly be induced to record their votes for the opposing party, that would give them bread rather than a stone, it is not impossible that the Government of the United States may, at some future time, be induced, by motives of humanity and true statesmanship—higher than party laws or necessity—to do for the imported African and his descendants what it has already commenced to do for such poor remnants of the aboriginal Americans as have not been, in Yankee parlance, “improved off the face of the earth” by the European races.

The great social want of the United States has always been, as it still is, a supply of good domestic servants. Under the system of negro slavery, the Southern people had the best servants in the world,—servants who knew their work and their position—who had no

South Carolina. The following stanzas will show what they think of themselves *quoad* the next world:—

“ We’s be nearer to the Lard
Den de white folkes, and dey know it;
See de glory-gate onbarred—
Walk in, darkeys, past de guard!
Bet yer a dollar He wont close it!
“ Walk in, darkeys, troo de gate;
Hark, de kullered angels holler:
Go ‘way, white folkes, you’re too late!
We’s de winning kuller! Wait
Till de trumpet blows to foller!
“ Halleloujah! tanks to praise!
Long enuff we’ve borne our crosses;
Now we’s de sooperior race,
And, wid Gorramighty’s grace,
We’s going to hebben afore de bosses!”

desire to ape the dress and behaviour of their masters and mistresses—who were not liable to be discharged from service for petty faults, or on any ordinary provocation—who lived in their masters' houses all their lives, and reckoned themselves, as far as affection went, a part, though a humble one, of the family. In the Northern and Western States no service of this kind was to be had. The native-born white American scorned domestic service, and neither man nor woman of that haughty breed would enter into it, though they would cheerfully undertake trade service as assistants in farms, shops or stores, or as mill-workers. Domestic service was thus left mainly to the free negroes and to the immigrant Irish, neither of whom had any scruples in earning an honest penny by labour that an American born considered to be beneath his dignity. But the service, whether negro or Irish, was not pleasant to the employer. The Irish and the negroes would not work or associate together, so that the master, or "boss"—for the word master was held to be offensive in the free North by the free negroes as well as by the Irish, and was never employed—had to choose of which colour he would compose his household attendants, and confine himself to it. There was but little difference between them. The Irish were generally very ignorant, and when they ceased to be ignorant they mostly became impertinent, and assumed airs of social equality which the people they were paid to wait upon could not brook. The negroes, too, were far from docile, and when smitten overmuch with the laziness inherent in their characters, could not be induced to work by the commands or entreaties which would have been imperative or irresistible with the same class of people at the South. The horrors of housekeeping in the great cities became in consequence something

too great for delicate or fashionable ladies to encounter, and married people of moderate means were only too happy to escape from the annoyance and trouble by living in hotels and boarding-houses, where the servants, black and Irish, were under the control of people whose trade and business in life it was to govern and make the best of them. Of late years, however, a new race has introduced itself into America, to the great advantage of every community in which it has established itself—a race which promises to supply domestic servants far defer and more handy than the Southern slaves, and that gives itself no airs of social or political equality to make its service repulsive. The discovery of gold in California first led the teeming population of China to try their fortunes as immigrants into the new land of promise, and ever since that time there has been a constant and daily-increasing influx of this people into the North American continent. On the first arrival of the yellow race in San Francisco, the antagonism and antipathy of the vulgar whites were furiously excited against them. They were subjected to every kind of indignity and insult. They were robbed, assaulted, and sometimes murdered; and if the murder were committed without white witnesses, there was no punishment for the murderer, because the evidence of the yellow men was not admissible in a court of justice, and the murder remained unproved for lack of competent evidence. The poor Chinamen, industrious, frugal, abstemious, ingenious, indefatigable, and peaceable as they were, seemed to excite the animosity of the lower order of whites, firstly on account of their colour, and secondly, perhaps mainly, because they could live and thrive where an Anglo-Saxon or Celt would starve, and because, as a consequence, their competition tended to keep down the

rate of wages. The atrocities committed on this deserving people at last became so serious and so scandalous, that the upper order of intelligent white men resolved to "abate the nuisance." They have a way of doing such things in America which is apt to be very effective when fairly and earnestly entered into; and the "Society for the Protection of the Chinese Immigrants," established in San Francisco, very speedily assumed such proportions as convinced the roughs, rowdies, and blackguards of Europe, who had congregated in California, that it would be their wisest policy to leave the Chinamen alone. Street quarrels between the Asiatics and the Europeans sometimes occur even now, in which the Irish are for the most part the aggressors; but the yellow men, with the real and intelligent public opinion of the place to back them, manage not only to hold their own, but to put their brutal assailants so wholly in the wrong as to convince them that the sooner they reconcile themselves to the fact that the Asiatics are welcome, and will be supported by the law, the better for their own security and comfort. The yellow men, as labourers, are in the majority in California, and the disaffected Irish and low English in that State will have to succumb, as is the practice and the law in a republic, where the minority has to keep the subordinate place until such time as, by legal means and the progress of opinion, it can grow into a majority.

An Irishman or an Englishman, especially if he come direct from Europe, has a long and a costly road to travel before he can reach the Golden City; whereas, for the Chinese, the way is comparatively short, and costs as little as a steerage passage from Liverpool to New York. There is every inducement for the Chinaman to leave his over-crowded native country, and settle, temporarily or permanently, in that

other flowery land which woos him across the Pacific; and there is also every inducement for his own countrymen, already settled and prospering in America, to organise means for bringing him over and paying his passage on the security of his future earnings. Pay the passage of a European to any part of America on the like security, and the probability is that the European will disappear in the whirl and vortex and be no more heard of, as a debtor. But with the yellow men the case is different. They keep faith. Wherever they may go, and into whatever districts they may spread themselves in search of bread and the modest fortune that suffices them, they honourably report themselves to the agency that speculated upon them, and never fail to pay back the full amount, with interest, of the expenses incurred to bring them from the Chinese shores to those of California. They have, too, the immense advantage over the Irish immigration, of being skilled labourers. They can not only till the soil, cut down the forest-trees, and do hard porter's work, and the work of navvies, but they can perform the most delicate manipulations of artificial work. They are jewellers, tailors, shoemakers, basketmakers, cabinetmakers, masons, gardeners, florists, vine-dressers, cigar-makers, lucifer-match makers, and first-rate getters-up of fine linen, as well as the cleanliest, most economical, and most skilful of cooks and waiters. So highly are they esteemed in every capacity to which they please to devote themselves, and so free are they from the vices most disagreeable in the Irish and the negroes, when they act as domestic servants, that a considerable demand has arisen for their services in the western and middle, as well as in the cities of the Atlantic seaboard. Under the new *régime* inaugurated by the civil war, and as its only result,

except the union of the States—the imperative law imposed upon all the States, that no man otherwise eligible to the rights and privileges of citizenship shall be excluded from the enjoyment of those rights and privileges by reason of his race or colour—it is probable, now that the first shock of ethnological antagonism has broken and been softened in California, that no serious, if any, difficulties will arise between the men of European and of Asiatic blood. The Federal Government has solemnly bound itself to that of China by the treaty concluded with Mr Burlingame, to do the same impartial justice to the Chinese in America as the Americans in China expect to receive at the hands of the Government of Pekin. The question of the suffrage will not be a difficult one, even if it should arise. The Chinese in America are birds of passage only. They take no interest either in the politics or the religion of the new land to which they have transferred their energies, and their only desire in visiting it is to remain a few years, make money, and go home to die among their own people. When a Chinaman dies in America, he is not buried there, for his friends, however poor, manage, as a sacred duty, to transport his remains to his own land, that the dearest wish of all Chinamen may be realised, and that his bones may rest among the bones of his ancestors. This is not merely custom, but religion, and it helps to remove from the minds of the native Americans any fear that the Chinese immigration, however multitudinous, will act as a disturbing force in American politics. It is estimated that there are about 65,000 Chinamen now in

California, and upwards of 90,000 in the adjoining States and territories on the Pacific.

The question of the importation of coolies to replace the negroes in the cotton, rice, and sugar plantations, is a social one, into which the antipathies and antagonism of race do not enter. If the Southern planters prefer coolies to negroes, and can induce the coolies to serve them, there is nothing to prevent the bargain between the two from being completed, subject to the supervision of the Federal Government, that cannot suffer slavery in fact, however modified in form, or disguised by theory, to be reintroduced into America. On this point President Grant, in his recently-delivered message, recommends legislation on the part of Congress. It is possible that watchfulness is required, not so much, perhaps, to guard the poor coolies from slavery on American soil, as to prevent them from being kidnapped on their own, and deported against their will, to be sold into servitude for wages that are insufficient. Slavery is defunct in America for the black race, and will not and cannot be resuscitated for the yellow. So far there is nothing to fear either from the neglect or the action of the American Government. The problem is not how to deal with the yellow men who are coming, but with the black men, who ought never to have been permitted to come as slaves, or encouraged to come as freemen. It is a difficult one under every aspect in which it can be regarded. It will greatly depend upon the negro himself whether it shall have a happier solution than that which has resulted in the case of the fast-disappearing aborigines of America.

EARL'S DENE.—PART V.

CHAPTER X.

It must not be supposed, however, in spite of what has been said, that the comings in and goings out of so important a person as Hugh Lester were not closely observed by those to whom they were of no consequence at all. Nor must it be supposed that even so unapproachable a person as Madam Clare was by her greatness protected altogether from the insults of her enemies.

One day, when she and her guest were being driven by the family coachman in a dignified manner along the High Street, a shabby fellow, conspicuously decorated with the popular colours of green and orange, tossed into her lap the following production of the popular muse, written on a scrap of paper as disreputable-looking as the marksman himself :—

“tak care tak care
o maddom C——e
& pra mor carfull Be
for Denthorp *Quean*
is not a *erl* nor a *dean*
but No. 23

“be where be where
then maddom C——e
yor rain is geting shortt & shortt
No longer yew
rules master *H—w*
not now but mis *L——t*”

The first impulse of the great lady was, seeing the colours that the man wore, to throw it back contemptuously into the street unopened ; but Miss Raymond, with a more popular tact, affected a curiosity to see it.

“Will you not read it first ?” she asked.

“It is sure to be some scurrility or other. No.”

But she had hesitated ; and so she did read it. Then she did not throw it into the street, but put it quietly into her pocket, dirty as it was.

“And may I not see it too ?” asked Miss Raymond.

“No, my dear ; it is not fit for you to see.”

She spoke gravely, and her guest, seeing that she was annoyed, said no more about it.

If Miss Clare had only known

what was going on at No. 23 at that very moment !

Marie was generally in the room when Hugh called, but not always. She was not an idle person : she was her father's zealous and willing housekeeper, and the children's nurse and governess besides. If her cousin, who was at home for a holiday, had time and leisure to entertain visitors, she had not. She liked to see Hugh, with whom she had become very good friends ; but duty had to come before pleasure, and, as she liked to have her evenings free, for her husband's sake, she had always plenty to do in the day. On this occasion, whatever she might be doing, she was certainly not in the room, which was occupied by Hugh and Angélique only. The latter was sitting at the harpsichord, but was not playing, unless playing can be held to consist

in striking an occasional chord, or playing scraps of imaginary tunes with one hand.

Hugh sat close by her side.

Now it is very difficult, in speaking of the outward actions of men and women, to be altogether serious. But, in all seriousness of speech, and with no underlying thought of ridicule, let it not be imagined that the conduct of Hugh Lester in this matter is in the least degree to be regarded as absurd. It was only far too natural.

To go back for an instant to the occasion of his first meeting with Angélique—to the date of the beginning of the danger.

Now, generally speaking, a first interview is seldom really dangerous. If the woman is not beautiful, the reason is obvious enough; and if she is, the man will be disappointed, as in the case of a really beautiful work of art, by finding that she is not like or equal to what he expected to see; and he will most probably light upon her first in the midst of appropriate and harmonious surroundings that temper anything like the violence of effect that lies in contrast. But, in this case, Hugh, young, impulsive, and heart-free, had come, as upon an unexpected discovery of his own, without warning—in the midst of poor and utterly unharmonious surroundings, and in the company of other women who might have been selected for the very purpose of acting as foils to her—upon the most beautiful woman that, as it seemed to his eyes, he had ever seen; and so the surprise, the admiration, and the pride of discovery, all blended with the charm of a subtle sort of romance which, to him at least, seemed to hang over the situation, and, brought about by the absolute power of beauty, were quite enough to render unnecessary any far-fetched theory about the nature of what people call love at first sight. What he felt then was not love; but it was what must

always grow into love of some kind or other, unless absence or a miracle intervene.

But no miracle happened, nor did Hugh keep away from the flame which Angélique, for her part, did not hide under a bushel. Her coquetry was not of that sort that has no purpose in it; and though in the comedy of human life the coquette, pure and simple, is about the most charming of characters, yet, when she is capable of purpose, she is apt to turn comedy into tragedy. The ornaments of *fêtes* and balls, whose coquetry belongs rather to the pleasant farce of human life than even to its comedy, are harmless enough; they, with their little artifices that need deceive nobody, are no more really dangerous than birds and flowers; but Angélique seemed likely to take far higher rank in the profession—to prove herself one with whom a Hugh Lester was no more in a position to cope than a fish surrounded by the net is able to struggle against the hands that draw it shoreward. The small fry, small in purse or in rank, may slip through the meshes, or some gigantic sea-monster may by sheer size and strength succeed in leaping over or breaking through them: but the good, honest, eatable fish is just the creature for whom the net is made; and for him there is no return to the sea. But still, the vain security of a stupid fish as the net surrounds it is not a pleasant sight in itself; and, in the same way, the sight of a human fish caught in a net from which there is no escaping is not in itself comic, though it is often grotesque enough. After all, whether it was love at first sight or no, it was first love that Hugh Lester was now experiencing; and first love is never absurd to those who will know it no more, even though, like all feelings that are pure and honest, the thought of it may justly enough bring a smile to the heart as well as to the lips.

At all events he was sitting now in the garden of his Armida, while the crusade was carrying itself on without the sword of him who should have been foremost of all. His attitude was expressive, for he was leaning downwards and forwards towards the enchantress, his eyes trying vainly to read hers, which were fixed modestly upon the keys. They had kept silence for a minute or more—he from the fulness of his heart, and she because she chose.

People are certainly provokingly perverse. It would have been so easy and natural, one would have thought, for Miss Clare's nephew—it saves trouble to give him that title at once, without perpetual explanation of the real relationship between them—to have fallen in love, if he must fall in love, with Alice Raymond, who was pretty enough, good enough, amiable enough, well-born enough, and the rest of it, to satisfy even his aunt's fastidiousness, and whose tastes agreed so well with his own. Nor is there any reason to think that Miss Raymond would have proved unconquerably cruel had he thus proved himself wise. Any man of experience, any man who knew the world, would have known in a moment which of the two to choose. Yes; but, after all, who really wishes to find too much knowledge of the world at twenty-one? There is something not ludicrous, but almost pathetic, in the apparent necessity that first love should always take an unconventional form, in its almost invariably being in the nature of a protest against the gross and unromantic reason of the world—in the way in which it almost always fixes itself upon an object which either ought not to be desired or is impossible to obtain, or which is, at the least, strange and unreasonable. All the world over, the page loves the queen, the king the beggar-maid, the sinner the saint, and, too often, the saint the sinner. When a couple is well matched, one may

very safely wager that both husband and wife have memories with which each other has nothing to do. Happily, as a rule, no man marries her whom first he loves; and when he does, there is considerable fear that his first love will not prove to be his last.

"Angélique," said Hugh, at last—his pronunciation of her name, by the way, was not exactly Parisian—"will you not give me just a word—just to let me——"

"But do you know what you have done?" she said, gravely, raising her eyes for a moment—"that you have asked me——"

"To be my wife. What else should I ask you, when that is all I want in the world?"

"Are you in earnest?"

"What can I say or do to make you believe it?"

"No, I cannot. Think of what I am—remember——"

"That I love you, Angélique."

"That I have, that I am, nothing—and that you——"

"Nothing! when you are all that I love!"

"A poor, friendless girl——"

"Shall not I be your friend, then? Would I not make myself everything to you?"

"Whom the world"—a scornful stress on the word—"whom the world will say caught you——"

"The world! What do I care for a hundred worlds? I shall be all the more proud to love you in its face. You are my world, Angélique."

"But I too am proud; and——"

"And yet you fear the world!"

"Not for myself—no, heaven knows! But——"

"For whom, then? Can you mean that you fear for me?" His head approached hers more closely still.

She allowed him to draw his own conclusion. "But your career?" she went on.

"What career?"

"Are you not going into Parliament? Are you not——"

"Parliament!"

"Oh, I suppose——"

"Suppose only that I love you—suppose only that my career will be to make you happy! I will do what you please; your career shall be mine——"

"And Miss Clare!"

Hugh was silent for a moment. Then he said,—

"Miss Clare has been more than a mother to me. She, I know, only desires my happiness, and she will welcome my wife as her daughter." But he did not speak quite so confidently as before.

"I am afraid of Miss Clare—Hugh." The little hesitating pause before his own Christian name gave point to her first utterance of it.

"And if she did object, which is impossible, I am my own master, I suppose?"

"But you are not master of Earl's Dene."

"Angélique!"

His tone put her in mind of Marie, and she smiled to herself.

"Do not mistake me," she replied; "I am not thinking of Earl's Dene. I could be happy in a cottage. I have been brought up to earn my own bread, and am willing to earn it. No—do not ask me to give up the life of toil to which I have always looked forward; I shall contrive not to be unhappy, never fear! But I will not stand in your way. You shall not run the risk of losing a single acre of Earl's Dene for me."

"Angélique! When I would lose a hundred Earl's Denes for a word from you! Is that all? If Miss Clare shows that all her affection for me has been so hollow, the tie between her and me must be broken. There are bounds to the duty of a real son to a real mother. I will not lose you, Angélique, if I lose everything for you. Ought not a man to leave both father and mother for his wife? And what would everything in the world be to me without you? And you should not suffer. I would toil for

you—I am strong enough; and let Earl's Dene go to the devil."

This was not in itself particularly eloquent; but if he could only have managed to speak in the same manner and with the same energy to the electors of Denethorp, Prescot and Warden would have gained but few laurels.

"But Miss Clare will not object," he went on, after a short pause. "I must know her better than you can. She will love you, when she knows you, nearly as much as I do. She would not be able to help it, Angélique. But do not let us talk of that—I know I am not worthy to look at one like you; but I do love you more than anybody else ever can, and I will try all I can to make you happy—to make you like me. And don't think of me as if the world mattered a straw to me. I hate it all. I only wish I were as poor as a rat."

"But, indeed—indeed I ought not."

"Ought not to like me?"

"No, indeed; how can one help what one feels? But——"

"Then you can, you do, love me, Angélique?"

"Oh, I ought not, indeed—but what can I say?"

And so, instead of saying anything, she allowed her lover to place his arm round her, and once more to draw his own conclusion.

This was one great point gained; but it was not everything. In spite of his boasted knowledge of his aunt's character, she had, or thought she had, a much better comprehension of it, even although his was derived from long intimacy, and hers from hearsay and guesswork. She also thought it just as likely as not that Hugh, in his joy and confidence, and as a matter of duty, would go straight to his aunt at once, and let her know of the important step he had just taken; and this would not suit her at all. She did not wish even her uncle or her cousin to know any-

thing of the matter except at her own time and in her own way.

Beginning with the less important point of the two,—

"Dear Hugh," she said, "I am so confused with all this that I do not know what I am doing or what I am saying. Marie will be coming in soon—don't let her know anything; I will tell her myself when I am more quiet. So you really think that Miss Clare will not mind? I should be so unhappy if I thought she would. I could not bear to think that I was the cause of your quarrelling with your best friend."

"Why, dearest," Hugh was beginning when Marie came in, carrying a note in her hand.

Angélique was vexed and looked it, but recovered herself quickly, after a warning look at Hugh.

"Ah, Miss Marie," said the latter, who was not able to compose himself quite so suddenly, "I was afraid I should not have seen you this morning. And, as it is, I shall have to make the same speech serve for good-morning and good-bye." He looked at his watch. "By Jove! I really must be off. I ought to have met White an hour ago. I suppose it's too late now, though, but I must try."

"If it is really too late you had better stay," said Marie. "But perhaps you will learn from this," and she gave him the note. "It has just come from Mr White's for you. I suppose they knew you were here."

"DEAR LESTER," here read,—*"Come over to White's office at once, if you can. We have been waiting for you an hour, and I have just heard where you are; and—you will, I am sure, excuse advice given in your interest—I think you had better not make quite so many visits at the Leforts just at present. You know how absurdly people here will talk. I write this in case you cannot come over now, for I have to*

leave the town for a day or two.—
Yours most truly, M. W."

Here was an opportunity for him to begin flying in the face of the world! But the childish thought was but momentary, and he took his leave at once, to Angélique's extreme annoyance. She had but half done her work after all. She dreaded a premature explosion of her mine, for she had the very smallest opinion of her lover's discretion.

By the time that the latter reached the office of White & Son, Warden had left it; and as the lawyer was for the moment engaged, Mr Brown, as a polite attention, placed in his hands a bundle of the last election squibs, printed on orange-coloured paper, to amuse him while he waited.

Most of them were silly enough; but there was one that was by no means silly, whatever else it was.

It was a copy of verses directed against Mark Warden, and about the grossest thing of the kind that Hugh had ever seen; indeed it was wonderful how the satirist had been so ingenious as to find so many holes in the coat of one whose life had apparently been so immaculate, and to discover so many foibles in a character that was so unusually exempt from them. But his very strength and consistency were so treated as to appear in the guise of weaknesses; his very youth was turned into a stumbling-block, and his talent into an offence. He was made to look like a selfish hypocrite, cold-hearted and cold-minded, seeking only his own ends, and without any better end than the most sordid sort of success. But this is to say little, for in satire form and manner are everything. The whole thing was done with the hand of a master, and was crowded with cruel wit and savage humour. The blows were dealt unsparingly, and every point was made to tell. It was evident that the enemy, if

they had been rivalled in eloquence, had determined not to be outdone with the pen, and that they had got hold of a man of nothing short of genius to write their lampoons. Moreover, the wit and the humour were by no means too subtle to be appreciated by the coarsest and most stupid of readers. It was as though the ghost of Swift himself had suddenly taken an interest in the Denethorp election, and had changed its politics. But the strangest thing about it was, that it was evidently written by some one who had a more intimate knowledge of Warden than any one at Denethorp—by one to whom his college career was as familiar as his part in the election. The allusions to it were horribly distorted, but they were perfectly open to the eyes of any one who had been contemporary with him at Cambridge.

Its abominable coarseness is a bar to the appearance of even an extract from it here. Indeed coarseness is a very mild term to apply to either its matter or its style.

"What in the name of everything detestable is this?" asked Hugh, as Mr White entered.

"Ah, you've read that, have

you? I wish you could spot the author. He seems to be a Cambridge man."

"I hope not, for the sake of the University; and I certainly know of no one who could or would have written such a thing. Has Warden seen it?"

"I wish you did know him, though," answered the agent. "It is damned clever—devilish clever. We would try the same shop."

"I beg you will not think of any such thing."

"I don't know, Mr Lester. It seems to me—if you'll excuse me for saying so—that you have left us pretty much of late to ourselves. Now, if you leave the battle to us altogether, as you seem rather inclined to do, you must let us fight it in our own way. And this thing here is not a bad style of way, I think—and Warden thinks so too."

"So Warden is going to be away? Is it about our business?"

"I don't know, Mr Lester, and I didn't ask him," said the attorney, taking a pinch of snuff. "Sir, that friend of yours will be Lord Chancellor! He's a practical man, sir—and that's worth all your law ten times told."

CHAPTER XI.

If Denethorp is a difficult place to arrive at, it is a still more difficult place to leave. Nevertheless it must be left at last, if only for a time.

The night of the day on which Hugh Lester had committed himself to his Armida was fine and warm, not only at Denethorp, but in London also. It was fine even in Fleet Street, and fine even in that thoroughfare which runs at the back of Farringdon Market and joins Fleet Street with Holborn.

And it had need to be fine in that narrow, crooked, evil-looking lane which, at all events in those days, knew no light save of the moon and stars; and they had

barely room to shine. And yet there were, once upon a time, people who looked upon that dark and disreputable passage as the political centre of the world—as an institution to which Westminster itself had to yield the palm of influence. Nor were there wanting distinguished and even great men, who increased their own influence by countenancing the notion.

The institution upon which its reputation in this respect was founded was a public-house with a large room at the back of it, which was nightly filled to overflowing.

Now on this particular evening the attendance was even more than

usually large, although not more than usually distinguished. The dense clouds of rank smoke issuing from a quarter of a mile of clay, and mingled with the steam that arose from a barrel and a half of hot liquor, were not out of keeping with the style of the politicians who emitted the one and absorbed the other. There were tailors and cobblers from the north and from the east, brokers from Bell Yard, Irish students from Gray's Inn, some seedy-looking barristers from the Temple, bagmen from the City, medical men from nowhere in particular, and scribblers from, say, Grub Street, thinking themselves in all honesty to be Grattans and Burkes at the very least. Mingled with these were one or two persons who had made an excursion to the place, either out of curiosity or for some other special reason; and the inevitable one or two, seen in every public place in London, who have blundered in by mistake, and who never know either where they are or what they are doing. But the general tone of the assemblage was that of *habitués*.

It is, however, not with one of the *habitués* that we have now to do; for, among the strangers, sitting in a quiet corner and watching the proceedings with interest, was Mark Warden.

The subject of the debate was of course political; and much was said in the course of it about the Westminster election, with which all men's minds were then full. Sir Francis Burdett seemed to be the hero of the evening; and if one or two of his Majesty's Ministers could have heard half the epithets that were heaped upon their names whenever they were mentioned, they must either have been utterly overwhelmed on the spot, or have been rendered callous to abuse for ever.

It must not be supposed, however, that the speaking consisted of nothing but abuse. On the contrary, Warden was surprised to hear

many pieces of real though turgid eloquence, especially on the part of the Irish element, and not a little good sense, put with practised skill. It was not, indeed, a highly intellectual or cultivated assembly, but it was neither an ignorant nor a stupid one; and the forms of debate were observed with a strictness and fairness that went far to compensate for much want of courtesy.

At last, however, there was a short pause in the proceedings, of which advantage was taken by a man who sat at the far end of the room to rise upon his legs quickly, but a little unsteadily. He was a big, burly fellow, with a heavy face, which, however, in spite of its far too plainly showing the signs of coarse self-indulgence, was neither without some pretension to good looks, nor, in spite of the apparent contradiction in terms, without some degree of refinement. His clothes were shabby in the extreme, and negligently put on—his linen was dingy and crumpled—he looked as though he were unfamiliar with the very idea of soap, and as though he used the bluntest of razors, and that but seldom; while his thick, bushy head of hair was all rough and tumbled about as though, if he did condescend to keep a razor, he disdained even to borrow a comb. He was probably young in years, but it was difficult to say.

He was evidently well known there, for his rising was greeted with much hammering of glasses upon the tables. Meanwhile he only stood swaying himself clumsily about, and he continued to do so for a full minute after the applause had come to an end: but the company showed no sign of impatience, and at last he began to speak.

His first words were so thickly spoken as to be inaudible, and a murmur of disappointment ran round the room.

"Sure and he's waited too late, inthoیرهly," said one who sat next to Warden.

"But it's just too airy," said another. "The laddie's nae gude till he's fou."

"And do you call him sober now?" asked Warden.

"That just depends upon a' the ceerrcoomstaunces," his neighbour answered, guardedly.

But by this time the orator had found both his legs and his voice—a big, resonant chest-voice that left his large mouth without a taint of thickness or huskiness, and filled the whole place with its sound.

"Now we shall catch it 'ot and strong!" exclaimed another of Warden's neighbours, rubbing his hands with delight.

And, sure enough, they did. After a few words to say that he was going to support the popular side, he set himself to work to destroy all the arguments that had been urged in its favour, and to ridicule all who had used them. Then he told the house that it was to be supported on entirely other grounds; and, with extreme ingenuity, so twisted and distorted his opponents' arguments as to make them seem to be his own. He appeared to revel in paradox, and in ridicule of everybody and everything. It was not a speech to convince, but it was really great art in its way, and, indeed, was not intended to convince. He was often interrupted, but woe be to those who interrupted him! for all that they got for their pains were personalities, from which they would rather have escaped free. To judge from the difficulty that he found in starting, he had evidently been drinking more than enough; but yet he had all the speeches of the speakers who had preceded him at his fingers' ends,—and not only their arguments, but their very words—and not only their very words, but their very tones. His own speech was not a magnificent specimen of real argument, but it was really a magnificent specimen of sophistry, of humour, and of sarcasm—even of eloquence; for he not seldom

soared into true eloquence, especially towards the close. At the same time it must be said that, while but few of the speeches of the evening had been distinguished by refinement of style, his was full of points and allusions that render any report of it out of the question, and which were received with that sort of laughter with which such an audience receives what even such an audience is half ashamed to hear.

When he sat down he had succeeded in insulting alike both friends and foes; and yet he was applauded by foes and friends alike with something more than the knocking of tumblers. Everybody had been made angry, and yet everybody was delighted that everybody else had been put down.

"There, mee jools—that's the thrue forrum, bedad, anyhow!" said the first of Warden's neighbours.

"It's vara weel—vara weel indeed," said the second.

"I sed as you'd get it 'ot!" said the Cockney, whose anticipation had been amply realised.

"Is he often here?" asked Warden.

"Ye'll nocht have hurrud um till noo?" was the Scot's idea of an answer—question for question.

Warden glanced at his watch. "Good-night, I must be going," he said to his neighbours generally; and then, having paid for what he had taken for the good of the house, picked his way among the tables to where the late orator was sitting in majestic repose.

"Barton!" he said.

"And who the devil——" was the other's polite answer, as he swung round brusquely.

"Don't you remember me? Warden of St Margaret's."

"Warden of Mag's! By God! so you are. What'll you drink?"

"Nothing for me. I only came to see you."

"Well, here I am. Fire away."

"This is a queer place, isn't it?"

I have never seen the sort of thing before, so, having nothing else to do to-night, I thought I'd look in. And I have certainly been rewarded. I didn't know you were a second Demosthenes."

"Waiter!—another! No—two others: one for this gentleman."

"No—nothing more for me. I suppose this is all pretty well over? At least I don't care to stay. What are you going to do?"

"What—am—I—going—to do? How the devil should I know?"

"Then, if you don't know, come and have some supper with me. I'm at the ——."

Barton got up at once. "I'm your man," he said. "Have some bones, and a bottle of port. We'll be Titans, and Port shall be our Pelion." And so, taking Warden's arm to steady himself, he half walked, half lurched, into the open air. He had not been asked for his reckoning; probably the landlord considered his company too valuable to run the risk of losing it.

It will probably have been conjectured that Warden's presence in Shoe Lane was not quite so accidental as it professed to be. He was not likely to have come from Denethorp to London just now for nothing. But, however this may be, he showed himself sufficiently hospitably disposed now that he was at his journey's end; for his companion and himself cannot very well be accounted congenial spirits.

Nor did his offer of hospitality appear to be unappreciated. Barton, as soon as the first effects of the open air had passed away, stalked, not staggered, along in a state of high good-humour, making the now half-empty streets ring with his heavy tread, his loud voice, and his still louder laugh. It is true that he talked rather to himself than to his companion, and without much heeding whether he was listened to or not: but still he was genial, after a fashion.

So they proceeded for some dis-

tance, arm in arm, when Warden stopped suddenly.

"Look there, Barton," he exclaimed; "what is that?"

Barton placed his hand over his eyes, and looked towards the part of the sky to which the other had pointed.

"That? That is a fire," he answered. "Let's see it," and he hurried Warden along in the direction of the centre of the glow. Very soon they met with others hurrying in the same direction; and, before long, guided by the infallible instinct in such matters that belongs to a crowd, they found themselves in front of the —— Theatre.

Any one who, like Barton, had hurried there in order to witness a great spectacle, certainly found himself fully gratified. Over the whole block of buildings of which the theatre formed a part, soared up high into the air, even as it seemed to the sky itself, a vast unbroken sheet of flame that looked like a mirror of fire. The colour of the night, which was still fine and clear, was changed altogether from that produced by the mixture of white moonlight and the natural blackness of the streets into a uniform dull redness, far more unbearable to the sight than the direct blaze of such sunlight as those gloomy streets ever experienced even on a summer day. It was, in a word, one of those great fires which are the grandest sights of great cities; which alone afford to their inhabitants any idea of the sublimity of nature when her strength is for once set free from the weight of bricks with which they have crushed her down. In this case the complete triumph of the flames had been the work of a few minutes only. The crowd that had hurriedly surrounded the doomed building could do nothing in the face of such a wall of heat and light—nothing but passively contemplate it with a sort of desperate admiration.

Barton in his excitement pressed close to the scene, dragging Warden with him. The avenue by which they approached the blaze was a narrow street which lay along that side of the house in which were the entrances to the gallery and stage. As on this side there were no windows through which any of the flames within might escape, so the effect which met their eyes was made up of a dense blackness surmounted by fire, in strong contrast with the red glow of the sky and of the opposite houses. The danger in case the wall should fall outwardly was great: and this, probably, according to the nature of crowds in general, was the reason why it was precisely here that the throng was thickest. The broad shoulders of Barton, and his complete carelessness about the shoulders of others, as well as for the abuse with which he was frequently assailed, but which he was well able to pay back in kind, soon forced a passage for himself and for his companion; and there they stood for some minutes sharing in the dead silence around them, which was only broken by the hissing of the flame, and by occasional ejaculations of delight whenever the glow made a sudden leap upward. Fortunately the delight of the bystanders was prevented from being entirely complete by their disappointing knowledge that the house had been empty for some hours, and that consequently the lust of horror, which is one of the chief attributes of a crowd under such circumstances, was doomed to be ungratified.

Presently, however, it seemed as though Fate was for once about to bestow more than it had promised, and to provide a real tragedy after the spectacle.

Though no human lives were in immediate danger, the burning house, nevertheless, contained what was worth the while of many to risk life itself to save. Close by the stage-door, opposite to which Barton and his friend were stand-

ing, had gradually gathered together, among others immediately connected with the theatre, a group composed of some of the unfortunate members of the orchestra, whose only means of livelihood were being consumed almost before their eyes. For one with the income of a fiddler or trumpeter to lose his instrument is much the same, in its consequences to him, as to lose his very hands—it means at least temporary ruin, and probably something worse than ruin, to himself and to those who are dependent upon him. But still, what was to be done? Who would be so rash as to plunge into that Phlegethon?

Suddenly Barton felt himself, in spite of his shoulders, thrust aside; and, turning round, saw a young man who, like himself, had contrived to reach the front, but, to judge from his appearance and figure, less by dint of strength than by force of energy and activity.

The new-comer, having reached the door, mounted upon one of the steps outside it, and then faced round quickly.

"Gentlemen!" he said, in a most un-English accent, but in a clear and ringing voice, "we lose the time. It has there not more than five minutes that the theatre burns itself; and it is possible that our instruments are not yet hurt. In five minutes one shall have them—me, at the least, I shall have the mine. *Suivez-moi!*"

And so, with the air of a captain calling upon his company to follow him into the breach, he ran straight through the stage-door.

Such an example is notoriously contagious; and there were not more than one or two of his comrades that did not follow—possibly their instruments were safe at home. There were even one or two volunteers, amongst whom Barton was conspicuous. He had come for the whole spectacle; and he was apparently not one whom any instinct of self-preservation would restrain

from seeing all of it that there was to be seen.

But there was also one who, without having anything at stake and without being a volunteer, also accompanied the charge. Mark Warden, grasped by Barton and pushed from behind, had to enter the narrow and intricate passages of the house whether he would or no. And though he did not feel fear, he would certainly have preferred to be left outside. He would scarcely have cared to risk life for life; and much less did he care to risk it to satisfy unproductive curiosity, or to save somebody else's violin.

Not sharing, therefore, in the eagerness with which the rest ran forward, but rather drawing himself backwards from them as well as he could, he before long found himself alone in a labyrinth; nor, so sudden and rapid had been the process of his arrival there, was he able to regain the outer air without a guide. So he made up his mind, as the wisest thing he could do, to wait there quietly till the others returned, seeing that, if he tried to extricate himself, he would probably only succeed in making matters still worse.

How long he waited there he did not know, but certainly a much shorter time than it seemed. But all of a sudden he became terribly aware that the passage in which he stood was beginning to fill rapidly with smoke; and he heard, instead of the returning feet of his companions, an ill-omened roar of voices outside.

In another moment his ears heard a worse sound still, and that not outside, but close at hand. It was as though the whole building had given an audible shudder, which passed through himself also. Lifting his eyes, he saw a fearful sign of doom indeed. The ceiling was cracking in long lines above him, through which rained a shower of sparks; and a tongue of fire, which at every beat of his pulse grew

longer and wider, had licked its way through the cornice, and was writhing on and on towards him through the air.

The roaring of flame, the falling of beams, were now the only sounds he heard. The whole world seemed to have suddenly faded away, and to have left him alone with instant death.

Who may describe the terror, the despair, of a moment when a lifetime of horror seems crushed into the space of the falling of a single grain of sand? It was not even as though a struggle for life was still possible. With his energy unimpaired he could do nothing but wait for the end, and pray that it might be soon.

And yet he did not lose his presence of mind. But that only made his utter powerlessness all the more terrible to bear. The most abject terror is nothing to what he has to undergo who retains his senses and his strength only to find in them additional instruments of torture.

Meanwhile the orchestra had been reached; those who could find them were already hurrying away with their instruments by another entrance—for the passage leading to the stage-door was no longer practicable—and in another instant the hand of the young musician who had led the way would have grasped the instrument for whose sake he had entered the house of fire, when Barton, who was close to him, suddenly exclaimed,

"Good God! where is Warden?"

He heard the exclamation, and turned. A word or two, rapidly uttered, passed between him and Barton; and then at once, forgetting his violin, and in spite of the suffocating smoke-clouds that were thick enough almost to destroy without the aid of flame, he dashed back through the perilous entrance from which his companions were now flying in confusion. Barton would have followed; but no sooner did he attempt to do so than his passage was barred by the sudden de-

scent of a burning beam, so that he had perforce to make the best of his way out with the rest.

Warden had just given himself up for lost. His lungs were already more full of smoke than of air, and he could already feel upon his face the hot breath that glowed from the fiery tongue that had now come so near as almost to have broadened into a sheet of flame, when, borne in, as it seemed to him, upon a blazing cloud, stood before him the figure of the young musician.

"Quick!" cried out the latter in French, "quick—in another moment—"

Unaware of the risk that had been run by a stranger for his sake, thinking only, if he could be said to think at all, that it was to save himself that his guide had returned, Warden followed him into the street.

It was indeed only a moment that had lain between them both and certain death. There was barely time for them to regain the outside of the house, when a crash, followed by a sympathetic cry from the crowd, told that the heavy roof had fallen in, and that all was over.

Then rode up a troop of the Life-Guards; but, except for their adding to the effect of the scene by reflecting the red and white light of the flame from their helmets and cuirasses, they might just as well, for any good they found themselves able to do, have remained quietly in their barracks. Foot-Guards, and volunteers in uniform, also mixed with the crowd; and, all too late, and yet as quickly as had been possible, came the galloping of fire-engines from all directions—just in time for their drivers to see and hear the terrible crash that told of the fall of the outer walls themselves. Then the flames, after a last leap upward, suddenly sank down into the crater thus formed, and the tragedy was wholly at an end.

For although not a single life had been lost, even by the falling

of a brick or of a beam, it was nevertheless a real tragedy that had just been played; for the sudden destruction of a great theatre means worse than death to hundreds. Then the members of the company who happened to be present became able to think of their losses, the pickpockets of their gains, the respectable spectators of going home, and the rabble of beer, the carpenters who had lost their tools and the musicians who had lost their instruments of suicide.

"I wouldn't have lost that sight for a thousand pounds," said Barton, turning carelessly to the young musician who happened to be standing just behind him. "Damned lucky, though, that the walls fell in instead of out. It was within the turning of a brick that some of us never saw a theatre again, outside or in. *Sic me, non se, servavit.*"

On hearing himself addressed, the other started as from a dream.

"You call it lucky!" he exclaimed, in a tone of scorn that was as un-English as his accent.

Barton first stared, and then laughed good-humouredly. "Did you want a brick on your head, then? I didn't—at least not before supper. After that, perhaps—"

"Monsieur?"

"Ah, *vous ate oon frongçais? je asked—demandais vous si vous wanted, you know, oon brick soor voter tate?*"

"As well there as on—"

"As on what?"

"As on *that*—as on my violin."

"You belong to the orchestra, then?"

"I did, I suppose."

"Poor devil! then I'm damned sorry for you." He was perfectly sober now, and yet he spoke lightly. Nevertheless, as he spoke he thrust his hand into his breeches' pocket. But it came out empty.

"Curse it!" he exclaimed, "not a farthing. Why, I had ever so

many shillings this morning—four, at least. I say, Warden—do you carry a purse? Just lend me something or other.”

Warden, who had now fairly recovered his composure, but was still ignorant of his obligations to his preserver from death, slowly drew out his purse and handed it to Barton, who held it out, without looking to see what it contained, to the unfortunate musician. “Never mind the fiddle,” he said; “one’s as good as another, I suppose.”

But he to whom it was offered drew back, placed his hands behind his back, and bowed.

“*Je suis gentilhomme*,” he said, with some dignity.

“A gentleman are you? Then go and be damned for one,” shouted Barton; and, taking Warden’s arm, stalked off again.

“That burnt-out son of a fiddle calling himself a gentleman!” he said, as they continued their progress. “Why, I shall be calling myself one next—or even you, Warden.”

His companion swallowed the impertinence silently, although he did not like it by any means. He also did not choose to notice that Barton had forgotten to return the purse.

They soon arrived at the hotel, which was not far from the scene of the fire; and the bones having been made bare and the port renewed, the latter recovered his temper.

“Barton,” said Warden, after a short time, and without having made any allusion to their adventure, “I always knew you were the best of us all, and that those blockheads of dons didn’t know a good man when they’d got him. But I had no idea you could do what you have been doing lately.”

“Pooh! one must get one’s liquor somewhere.”

“Oh, I don’t mean that—I mean something still better.”

“And what’s that?”

“It is really the best thing of the kind I ever saw—as good in its way as your trochaics on the Proctors. They were superb; I know them by heart still; but I almost think this beats them. I wish you had done it in Greek, though,” he added with a smile, as he handed him a copy of the famous squib.

Barton took it, looked at it with one eye, seemed puzzled for a minute, and then exploded into a roar of laughter, which he did not attempt to check.

“Oh, this?” he said at last. “I’m glad you like it, though! I was afraid it wasn’t strong enough.”

“It’s quite strong enough, I assure you.”

“Ha—ha—ha! Do you want it made stronger? I’ll just add a line or two now, if you like. I feel in the humour. Look here——”

“Are you turned so venomous a radical, Barton?”

“I? Damme, no. What do I care for your politics and stuff? Tom Prescott’s a devilish good fellow—ten times what you are, Warden: but I’d write like a Tory for sixpence.”

“No, no, Barton, that won’t do. A man can’t do a thing like that twice in his life.”

“I bet you I could, though.”

“I would take your wager, if I were not sure you would lose.”

“Come—what will you bet I don’t do it?”

“A thing as good as this on the other side! Against Prescott himself?”

“Against the devil, if you like.”

“Well then, I lay you ten guineas to half-a-crown, you can’t write a squib on Prescott as good as this is.”

“Done! Waiter! Pen—ink—paper.”

“But surely you won’t do it at once?”

“Just the time. Can’t write in the morning—never could. Now or never. Damn it, though—just keep the ink-bottle steady. I must keep my finger on my left eyelid, I

see—capital plan when the letters get mixed up. Here goes.”

Pressing two fingers over his left eye, and swaying and nodding over the table—for he had by this time drunk more than enough to render any ordinary man incapable of doing anything—he dashed at the paper and wrote rapidly in a sprawling hand, laughing to himself from time to time with enjoyment of his own work. At the end of an hour or rather more, during which he had consumed the whole of another bottle of port, the task was done. He threw himself back triumphantly in his chair, upsetting the ink-bottle in the process, hurled the pen to the other end of the room, and tossed the paper, all smeared and blotted, but not quite illegible, to Warden. “There you are,” he said. “That’ll wash.”

Warden read it over quietly; and then, without a word, handed two bank-notes to the author, who pocketed them forthwith, and then called out—

“Waiter! a bottle of brandy! and now we’ll make a night of it.”

Alas for Warden! Before long he began to think that he had fallen into the clutches of a demon—that he had raised a fiend from whom he should never be able to free himself. The hour was already very late; but many other hours flew by, and still Barton sat there, drinking brandy, talking, quoting, spouting Greek, and boasting—all in a style which, though always coarse, was at first amusing and even witty, but very soon degenerated into such sheer, unutterable

filth, devoid of either wit or humour, that even Warden, who was not particular, and who was not listening to him for the first time, was amazed. At last, sleepy and weary as he was, and almost overcome by the reaction that had followed upon his escape from such extreme danger as that in which he had been placed so short a time since, the disgusting monotony of his guest’s talk became torture. If the man would but get drunk enough to be put into a hackney-coach and sent away! But no—the more he drank, the more he talked, the clearer grew his voice, and the steadier his hand, although, no doubt, he would have found it impossible to rise from his chair. Warden made as many hints as he could about his own fatigue; but he might as well have spoken to the bottle as to Barton. Nor did he dare to march off to bed, for fear of what might happen; for the waiters had retired long ago. Five o’clock struck, and there sat Barton: six o’clock, and he sat there still: seven o’clock, and the house was stirring; but he seemed more immovable than ever. At last, without remembering how, Warden dropped asleep in his chair from sheer exhaustion; and when again he woke, the first thing he saw was Barton, curled up upon the hearth-rug, sleeping like a child.

“There’s one comfort,” he thought to himself, rather revengefully, as he took his way wearily to the Denethorp coach: “the beast must be killing himself—and not by inches.”

CHAPTER XII.

Everybody who is not of a purely lymphatic temperament must, during the course of the day, accumulate a certain amount of ill-temper, which has to be let out somehow or other. On the whole, the most pleasant people to deal with are

those who let it evaporate as it comes, spreading it over every part of the day and over everybody with whom they come in contact—themselves, their friends, and strangers impartially; for the result is that their ill-temper is dealt out in such

infinitesimal doses at a time as to annoy nobody very much. Others, again—and this is by no means a bad plan—reserve theirs for some particular period of the twenty-four hours, such as breakfast-time or the hour before dinner, when nothing that anybody says or does signifies anything to anybody. But there are some—and, unfortunately, these form the majority—who reserve theirs for particular people; who are all that is delightful to the world at large, but who, at home, are bears or tigers. So common is this practice, that a person who is exceptionally genial in society, is seldom one with whom it is altogether pleasant to live. Now, Angélique Lefort, like everybody else, had her annoyances, and, consequently, her passages of crossness; and as she was far too amiable a person to display these to the world, she was forced to let herself out either in solitude or among her slaves at home, when she happened to have them at hand. It is very doubtful if Hugh Lester would have continued to be quite so much in love had he had the command of a magic mirror for the rest of that day. It was mainly with Marie that she was put out for having interrupted her *tête-à-tête* at so exactly the wrong moment; but it was not so much upon her cousin that the avenging cloud settled as upon the rest of the household. The children were snubbed to their hearts' content, until Ernest settled down into sullenness and Fleurette into tears; and even the mild old father of the family found his coffee bitter. But as everything that their divine Angélique said or did was always necessarily right, she was only petted and sympathised with all the more—silently, that is, for no one dared to say a word to her, except Ernest, who was not overfond of his cousin, and who, in consequence, got as severe a reproof from Marie as she was capable of bestowing.

But, fortunately for her, the days

of magic mirrors had long gone by, so that Hugh went his way with no image of her in his mind save such as she had afforded him in person.

After his interview with his agent was over, he went home to Earl's Dene, and, as was his habit, reported to his aunt and her guest all that he had learned of the progress of affairs in the town. But his heart was not in his story, for he had already obtained the triumph for which he cared the most. His real business now was to render to Miss Clare the explanation that was due to her as mistress of Earl's Dene from her heir and adopted son, and which he felt ought not to be delayed.

Nevertheless, manly as he was in all essential things, he could not but feel a little nervous about telling the old lady that there was to be an heiress to Earl's Dene as well as an heir—or, as he intended to put it to her, that she was to have a daughter as well as a son. He had all his life, like most of those about her, been a little afraid of her, in spite of his experience of her affection for him; and perhaps the enormity of proposing to marry Miss Raymond's dependant seemed a little greater now, as a matter of confession, than it did when he was actually urging his suit.

Fortunately or unfortunately, however, according as it might have turned out, he could find no opportunity of telling her his story in the course of that evening: at least he thought he could find none, which is practically the same thing. While smoking his nightly cigar, however, he made up his mind that, come what come might, he would tell it the next morning; and resolved, not out of deference to the advice of Mark Warden, but in order to compel himself to keep his resolution, that he would refrain from calling in Market Street until his story was told.

Next morning, then, he rose with a full intention of doing what was

obviously right, and, when breakfast was over, was on the point of telling Miss Clare that he wished to speak with her, when she herself anticipated him by saying, when Miss Raymond had left the room,

"Hugh, you know how I despise such things; but look at this that some man in the street was impudent enough to throw at me yesterday." And she gave him the crumpled piece of paper that she had kept in her pocket.

He read the warning, and blushed to his hair.

"What is this, aunt?" he asked, angrily.

"That is just what I wanted to ask you," she answered. "One knows what things people write and say at elections, but this is such an extraordinary thing to say."

"And did any one dare——"

"I told you. It was thrown into the very carriage—into my very lap. Really people here seem to have lost all respect, all decency. And yet this could not have been done without some meaning or other. I suppose they have got hold of some story of your meeting Miss Lefort in the lodge park when you first came down."

"No, aunt; I do not think it is that."

"Just let me speak kindly to you, Hugh. It is not the first time that I shall have given you advice, nor, if you take it, will that be for the first time either. I am an old lady, you know, and may talk about such things; and, as you may have guessed, perhaps I have not always lived so much out of the world as I have since you have known me."

"My dear aunt, I——"

"Listen to me first, please. I can make all manner of allowances. This Miss Lefort is, I hear, a respectable girl. Now——"

"But, aunt——"

"Wait, please. Now—you know what I mean—I should be very sorry indeed to think that you,

meaning no harm even, as I am sure you would not, had been putting any nonsensical ideas into the head of any young girl who is good and respectable. I do not ask you any questions——"

"But I assure you——"

"But I do wish to ask you—and now, of all times—not, by any conduct of yours, to give the people of the town occasion to speak ill of Earl's Dene. You are almost a Clare, you know, and should remember our motto. The French have a saying which to my mind is a very noble one, when rightly used, that '*Noblesse oblige*.' We, my dear Hugh, are in a position to set an example, not only of right conduct, but of conduct that should be without a suspicion of wrong. We must give up our amusements for the sake of our duties. You understand me, I know."

"Quite, aunt; but——"

"And just think for a moment. This girl is the sister of Miss Raymond's companion——"

"Cousin, aunt."

"Well, almost the sister—of Miss Raymond's servant, in fact. It cannot be decent that you should give people occasion to say that you are on too intimate terms with her, no matter how contemptible may be those who say it. Besides, it is not fair, not kind, to the girl herself, to whom, in her position, character is everything; and people can only couple your name with hers in one way."

"Aunt——"

"That is all I wanted to say to you. And now I will destroy this wretched scrawl. Are you going into the town to-day?"

Now was the time to make a clean breast of it—now, if ever. It need scarcely be said, however, that Hugh did not take advantage of it.

In effect, he found it impossible. It was not only that Miss Clare was always a difficult person to talk to when she had got some fixed notion into her head; it was

not only that she had, so far as she had been able, trained him in habits of passive obedience from his earliest boyhood. It was by no means these circumstances alone that scattered his resolutions of the night and of the morning. It was partly a higher feeling, partly a lower, than was founded upon any aspect of the relation in which he stood to his aunt that had closed his lips.

To begin with the lower. He somehow could not help feeling a little conscience-stricken in the matter; and though a touch of conscience is by no means a proof that a man has done wrong, it is at any rate a proof of his not being satisfied that he has done right. Of course Miss Clare had obviously and utterly mistaken the true state of the case; she had mistaken, not only his intentions, but the very person towards whom they were directed. Now the mistake about the person was not, in itself, of very much consequence; but if she had so strongly objected to the mere suspicion of a flirtation with one of the two cousins, what would she have had to say to the idea of marriage with either of them?

Now there is a theory about *mésalliances* which accounts for a great many things. No man ever feels much offence at the idea of another man's marrying beneath him; but when he hears of a lady running off with a groom, or being guilty of any similar escapade, he is both astonished and disgusted. In like manner, even as men are tolerant of each other's condescensions, and intolerant of those of women, women are not altogether intolerant of *mésalliances* on the part of their own sex, but bestow the weight of their disgust upon such social offences on the part of men, without considering the unfrequency of the one or the frequency of the other. In her young days, it may be remembered, she had herself been just the person to marry beneath

herself merely for the sake of doing something *outré* and heroic; but, full as she was of all manner of prejudices, the condescension of the heir of Earl's Dene to a Miss Lefort would have seemed the depth of degradation, whether he should condescend by way of marriage or no; and she had, in the course of her conversation with him, showed what she thought about the matter as plainly as possible, though less perhaps by the mere words she used than by her manner of saying them. Of course, Hugh could not be expected to share her feelings in this matter, if only for the reason that she was a woman and he a man; yet still, although in addition to this he was full of youthful impulse and she already old, he deeply in love and she full of social pride, he could not help to some extent feeling, though unconsciously, that he had, after all, been doing something that a lady would instinctively feel to be wrong; and, as a gentleman, he was touched in conscience accordingly, though it might be ever so little.

But, as has been said, a higher sentiment had been also aiding to bring about his silence. He, too, fully admitted that *noblesse oblige*; and he, too, believed in the Clares almost as much as Miss Clare herself could have desired. Not only so; not only did he accept the traditions of his family and of his class for gospel; but he was at heart a good fighter, although of late he had rather neglected the battle in which he was engaged. And now it was certainly not the time for him to make his own affairs a stumbling-block in the way of the victory for which his friends were striving. What he had to do for the present was to fight for victory, though but for their sakes, as though he still cared about it for his own. It was the country gentleman's principle of conduct—to do what was right in his own county, from repelling an invading army to sitting as a silent and superfluous

member of his Court of Quarter Sessions; and to consider everything to be of importance that concerns the spot of earth in which God has placed him. The true importance of the Denethorp election was no doubt very small indeed, but he never thought so; and the serious and earnest pride of Miss Clare, though it did not affect his love for Angélique, yet made him remember that he had something to do, as he considered, for his country, and for the institutions in which he had been taught to believe. Now it was obvious enough that, under the circumstances, a confession to Miss Clare on the spot would be worse than inopportune; and so it was that a little want of readiness and self-confidence, some difficulty in explaining himself, a long habit of respect and obedience, and a great deal of honourable selfishness, all acting together at the same moment, caused him to hold his tongue.

"Shall you not then be going

into the town?" repeated Miss Clare, seeing that he paused.

"No—I do not think I shall. I don't see how I can be wanted to-day. By the way, how splendidly Warden is working for us! White is full of him."

"So I hear, and so I can see too. It is satisfactory in these days to see a young man of promise who does not think it fine to be a radical." She paused, and sighed. "What shall you do with yourself, then? Ride with Alice?"

But this Hugh could not do. He needed to be alone after his discomfiture; he had to think how he should overcome his aunt's prejudices, and how he should act, when the election was over, if he should find them invincible.

"No," he said, "I have something to attend to here. I don't think I can."

And Miss Clare, as Alice returned to the room in her riding-habit, looked from one to the other, and sighed again.

CHAPTER XIII.

The next morning Angélique rose with a heavy and anxious heart to hear, as she expected, of her lover's quarrel with his aunt, which, from what she knew of their respective characters, she judged to be inevitable. It was not only that she feared the consequent failure of her scheme; she feared also the loss of her situation with Miss Raymond—in short, that she would have grasped at a shadow only to lose the solid meat. But the morning passed, and the afternoon, and still Hugh did not come. Had she been really in love with him, she could not have desired to see him more; and it was with a sinking of the heart that at last, towards evening, the servant put a note into her hand, directed in a handwriting which she guessed to be that of Hugh. A groom from Earl's Dene was waiting for an answer.

"A letter from Earl's Dene?" asked Marie.

"Only a note from Miss Raymond," she answered; "I have a book of hers that she wants returned. I must go and look for it. I know I have it somewhere among my things."

As soon as she reached her own room she tore the note open with a trembling hand.

"Dearest," she read, "I have not been able to speak to my aunt yet; nor, indeed, do I think I shall be able to till the election is over. She would be very excited to hear of it, so I had better wait till we have done with the contest. How I wish it was over, I need not say. I am longing to see you, and counting the hours till to-morrow, when I shall come to you whatever happens—before twelve if I can. I cannot believe in my happiness yet unless

I see you—it is all like a dream.—
H. L.”

She both smiled and sighed with relief, and forgot all her anxiety in a moment.

“He is afraid of Miss Clare after all,” she thought to herself. “He will *never* tell her now!”

So she took a pencil and scribbled her answer.

“My dear Hugh,—How strange it seems to begin so!—I have no doubt you will do all for the best, and doubt not all will be well. I can wait—I have trusted you with too much not to trust you altogether now!—A. L.

“Of course I will be in to-morrow morning.”

This she carried to the man with her own hands, and she spent all the rest of the evening in a state of temper as angelic as her name.

“Did you find the book?” asked Marie.

“No—I could not find it. I suppose Miss Raymond must have got it herself without knowing it.”

But though her own placidity was restored, the rest of the Lefort family had by no means so much reason to be satisfied with the state of things. The teaching work of the old Frenchman had lain principally among the families of the mills—that is to say, of the opposition; and, ever since the beginning of the contest, he had found himself—why, he could not understand—looked upon coldly in all quarters. In many cases, even, his services were suddenly dispensed with. Now the number of French students was of course never too large in Denethorp; and though Monsieur Lefort enjoyed a monopoly of those that there were, a pupil more or less made a considerable difference to him. Even at the best of times he found it sufficiently difficult to get along respectably, and to pay his way. He was obliged to dress tolerably well; he had two young children to feed and educate and clothe: he had to support Marie,

who could not be spared from the household and the children to a farther extent than that of taking one or two very cheap pupils, whom she taught with Ernest and Fleur-ette; and the long illness of his wife had burdened him with many debts. Worst of all, he was far too mild and despondent a man to make a really good fight of it; and he was too blind to see what was going on even in his own family.

Among other places where he taught was a boarding-school, which has been mentioned already, and was kept by a lady whose respectability was of the extreme sort. It was patronised chiefly by the tradespeople of Denethorp and Redchester, and was the French master's best stronghold; for to learn French was there *de rigueur*, as much even as to learn the use of the globes. On this day he had been there to give his lessons as usual; but instead of being allowed, as usual, to go straight to the schoolroom, he was asked to speak with Mrs Price herself in her room of state. She was a strong-minded person, rather of the dragon type, like so many school-mistresses of the old style; and she ruled her school as Miss Clare would have liked to rule Denethorp. Her notions of decorum and propriety were terribly strict; and, altogether, a private interview with her was rather a thing to be feared, not only by her pupils, but by her teachers also. But the age, ugliness, respectability, and meekness of Monsieur had won her heart; and so she had generally left him pretty well alone.

But now she was stiff, even for her.

“Sit down, Mr Lefort.”

He bowed, and sat down.

“I think, Mr Lefort, you have now known me for some time?”

“I have had that happiness, madame.”

“Very well. And you know the school, too?”

“I think so by this time, madame.”

"And you are acquainted with the character it bears?"

"That it is of the highest. Yes, madame."

"Character, Mr Lefort, is everything."

"Assuredly, madame."

"And do you feel justified, Mr Lefort, in coming here day after day and week after week to teach in a school whose character is such—is such—as you admit it to be?"

"Madame?"

"I say do you feel justified, Mr Lefort? That is the question."

"I do not understand, madame."

"I thought, Mr Lefort, that you were a respectable man. In *you* I did *not* think myself deceived. But it is not that. I know what men are too well to be surprised at—at—anything. But you must be aware that as long as your family go on as they do, you are not a fit and proper person to be the instructor of young ladies of respectability."

Mr Lefort became stiff in his turn. "I must beg you to explain yourself, madame. What have you heard of my family?"

"Oh, you ask, do you?"

"Certainly, I ask."

"All the world knows it."

"And what does all the world know?"

"I blush for you, Mr Lefort! I blush for your grey hairs!"

"I am not conscious, madame, that I have any reason to blush for them."

"So much the worse—so much the worse, Mr Lefort."

"But this must be some slander. I will ask you—"

"Ask your daughter, sir—ask Miss Lefort, who is the talk of the whole town."

"*Mon Dieu!* Marie—the best girl in the whole world? For shame, madame."

"Yes, for shame, indeed! Ask her, as you pretend you do not know! And you will please to consider our engagement at an end. I

will pay you, of course, instead of the usual notice; and I owe you something besides, I believe. You will be good enough to let me have the account at once."

"A gentleman does not pretend, madame. Yes, I will ask Marie—not you any more, who accuse her, and will not say why; and I will not take your money—no, not a penny—not even when you apologise to her, as you will!"

He had some blood left in his dried-up veins, after all; and he dashed out of the room as if he had been younger by thirty years, leaving Mrs Price petrified and rather doubtful.

No doubt he did well to be angry, though not from a practical point of view, seeing that he had already anticipated the money that he had so scornfully refused. But he changed his mind about mentioning the matter to Marie; he could not bring himself to distress her, as indeed it seemed to insult her, by asking her what it all meant, and he had too much confidence in her to really suspect anything wrong. He would almost as soon have suspected Angélique herself. The calumny, whatever it might be, must, of course, be traced to its source at once, but not by means of her who was doubtless the most ignorant of its existence. He did not even speak of his dismissal when he got home, but only said that he should not be at the school as usual the following morning. Meanwhile he considered to whom he should apply for advice.

One effect of his not going out the next day was that he spoiled the chance of anything like a *tête-à-tête* between his niece and Hugh, who came according to his promise. She just whispered to her lover that no one knew anything about their engagement as yet; a communication at which, in truth, he was more surprised than disappointed.

But he was fated to be still more surprised. He was about to leave, after a very short and unsatisfactory

visit, when Monsieur Lefort said to him,

"Mr Lester, should you think me very presuming if I ask your advice about something that concerns myself?"

"If I thought myself able to advise you in anything——"

"Then would you let me walk with you a few steps in your own direction?"

"I shall be delighted to have your company. I am in no hurry."

As soon as they were in the street Monsieur Lefort told him of his interview with Mrs Price.

"I could not speak to her any more," he said, when he had finished his story, "and I could not distress Marie. What had I better do to find out what it means?"

Lester frowned angrily. "I am glad you did not mention it to Miss Lefort or to—to her cousin. I, too, have heard something of this. I am ashamed that the Denethorp people should be such idiots—for myself, I should not care a straw, but if you are to suffer it must be stopped at once. It is to injure me that these absurd stories are put about."

"You, Mr Lester?"

"Yes; in my election."

"But how——"

"I scarcely like to tell you, it seems so absurd. People pretend to have noticed that I am too much at your house."

"*Eh bien!* and what then?"

"They join my name with that of Miss Lefort, your daughter, it seems; and they have the pleasant and charitable idea about me that I can be after no good."

"Then, Mr Lester, you should have done one of two things. You should have told me, or discontinued your visits. You should have remembered the value of a girl's good name, when she has nothing else."

"Indeed you wrong me. How could I have done either, when it was only the day before yesterday that the report came to my

own ears? And I have not been since."

"But you came to-day."

"Monsieur Lefort, let us understand each other. I did come to-day, but it was not to see your daughter."

"Was it, then, to tell me what you had heard?"

"It was not."

"What was it for, then?"

"It was to see your niece."

"What! Angélique?"

"Yes. I love her."

"*Grand Dieu!*"

"And I would make her my wife."

Monsieur Lefort was so utterly taken aback that he could not speak for many instants. At last he said,

"And does she know it?"

"I have told her so, and she has given me hope."

"And when was this? How long has she known it?"

"She must have known it for long. But I did not tell her so till when I was last here."

"You have done wrong, Mr Lester—very wrong."

"I hope not."

"You have done very wrong. I know enough of English ways to know that."

"But I am my own master. I am serious in what I say. I mean rightly and honestly. In what have I done wrong?"

"That may all be very true. I do not doubt you mean well. But you should have thought a little of us, I think."

"Oh, what matters the chatter of a townful of malicious idiots?"

"Nothing to you, perhaps. But to us it means ruin."

"But when she is my wife? What can harm you then?"

"In a matter like this, Mr Lester, you will pardon me for speaking of your own affairs. You have made them mine also. I presume that Miss Clare does not know of this intention on your part."

"Not yet."

"So I thought. No. If you do not consider us, we must consider you. People would blame us with justice if we were the cause of your ruin."

"But if Angélique——"

"If Angélique is the good and brave girl I take her for, she will see it in the same light that I see it. I will speak to her, and then she or I will write to you. In the meanwhile do me the favour of coming to see us no more. You cannot, with honour, condescend to us, nor we ascend to you. I daresay you will think I say hard things, but you will think better one day. And you must remember that I am old enough to be your father, and that I love Angélique as if I were hers."

"No; I cannot consent to that. I cannot give her up like this. If she loves me——"

"That can make no difference if she cannot be your wife."

"But surely Angélique can judge for herself."

"No doubt. But surely you would not have her judge blindly."

"But if she has decided already?"

"Mr Lester, this argument will prove endless. As a gentleman, I trust you will not come to us while, as you see, your visits are likely to do us a fatal injury. If you do, I shall be obliged to think of you badly, which I am far from doing now. And I should, in my own self-defence, feel it my duty to communicate with Miss Clare. Just think—it is a question now neither of you nor of Angélique, but of Marie."

Lester did think, and then said, frankly,

"I will not give up Angélique. But I will give you my word not to call in Market Street until after the election is over, on condition that you will let me write once to Angélique to explain why. I might do so without your permission, I know; but I wish you to feel that you can trust me."

"And I do trust you. And you shall have an answer."

And so, upon this understanding, they parted, mutually dissatisfied.

CHAPTER XIV.

When Monsieur Lefort returned home after this conversation, he felt terribly fatigued. His life was one of chronic, monotonous trouble, and the excitement of the last four-and-twenty hours had been too much for him. Little used to the occurrence of anything unusual, he found himself both physically and mentally incapable of speaking either to Marie or to Angélique of what was upon his mind; and so he drank his coffee in silence, wondering the while how long he should be able to afford himself his only luxury. Angélique was curious to know what had passed between her uncle and Hugh, but the silence of the former reassured her. After all, she had not much to fear from him—he was not Miss Clare. But still she liked things to go on with-

out unpleasant scenes; and if she cared about anything, she cared for the good opinion of Marie.

She was, however, to a certain extent enlightened as to the position of matters by a letter which she received from Hugh that very evening, and which her uncle handed to her in a deprecating sort of way. When she had read it she saw clearly that her best course would be to trust to fortune, seeing that she had secured her fish, and that she could rely upon Miss Clare's being kept in ignorance for the present. After all, if her uncle should make a fuss—and she had never yet known him do so about anything—she could manage him somehow; and from Marie she had nothing to fear but an "*Angélique!*"

And so the nomination of the

member for Denethorp was brought nearer by another day. Warden had returned from London, and had slept off his fatigue; and Marie had something else to think about than the humours of her cousin. And so, on the whole, Angélique had no very great cause to be dissatisfied. Madam Clare could not live for ever, and then——

For his part, Hugh had, during the last day or two, been rather more attentive to his aunt's guest than usual: not by any means of set purpose, or with any intention of throwing dust in the eyes of anybody, but simply because he somehow felt that he had not of late paid her as much attention as mere politeness required—perhaps to some extent also on the same principle that makes a schoolboy, who has been guilty of some great piece of mischief which he would rather not have found out, unnaturally well behaved in other respects. Not that Miss Raymond much cared. She liked him very much, but she was by no means perpetually thinking of love and marriage. When she rode, she rode to ride, and not to flirt. The interest which she took in the election itself arose from her being readily interested in everything that went on about her, and from its interesting her friends, and not from any special cause connected with the candidate himself. Nevertheless, the dust did find its way into Miss Clare's eyes all the same.

But one day, on returning from a ride with Miss Raymond, which had been pleasant to her, and, in spite of his anxieties, not unpleasant to her cavalier, the latter was told that a gentleman was waiting in the library to see him, whose card bore the name of Lieut. Mountain, R.N.—a name that he recognised as that of a retired naval officer who lived at Redchester, and amused the evening of his days with local politics and agitation.

"I have the honour of addressing Mr Lester?" he asked, al-

though he knew Hugh by sight perfectly.

"Pray sit down, Mr Mountain."

"I call, sir, as the friend of Mr Prescott."

"And may I ask what has obtained for me the honour of a communication from Mr Prescott?"

"I said as the friend—as the friend, sir—of Mr Prescott, who is, sir, as you may be aware, the popular candidate for the representation of this borough."

"I am certainly aware that he is a candidate, but whether he is the popular one——"

"Mr Prescott, sir, feels that he has cause to complain of your conduct towards himself personally."

"I should be sorry to think that. He does not expect me to retire from the contest, I suppose? For, except by opposing him, I do not know what reason I can have given him to complain."

"Sir, this is a most serious business, and I beg you will treat it seriously. Mr Prescott feels that you, by yourself or by your agents, have acted towards him in a way not becoming in one gentleman towards another."

"Sir!"

"You will understand, sir, that I desire to proceed in this affair with all courtesy. Perhaps, sir, you may not—I say you *may* not—be aware that there has been published in this town an infamous libel."

"I am perfectly aware of that; but I should hardly have thought that Mr Prescott would have charged me with attacking my own friends."

"Am I to understand, sir, that you deny all knowledge of what I allude to?"

"You may understand that I don't understand a word you say."

"I allude to this, sir." And he produced a copy of Barton's last performance, which had been flying about the town all day, but had not as yet found its way to Earl's Dene.

Hugh read it.

"And does Mr Prescott mean to say that he can think me the author of a thing like this?"

"Mr Prescott, sir, has reason to believe that he knows who the author is, and he has excellent reason to believe that you know who it is as well as he. And he thinks, sir, that it is an infamous publication."

Hugh considered for a moment. "Could it be Warden himself?" he thought. It did not seem to be unlikely. But as he did not choose to guess,

"Well, it has been published now," he said, "and can't be unpublished again. What does Mr Prescott expect me to do?"

"He demands an immediate apology, sir, for this slanderous and unjustifiable attack."

"An apology? How can I apologise for what I know nothing about? I am sorry it appeared, of course; but really I think that he is the very last person who ought to complain of it."

"An apology, sir, and an immediate suppression."

"He must know, Mr Mountain, and so must you, that suppression is impossible. And I have done nothing that will admit of an apology."

"Then, sir, do I understand that you refuse to apologise?"

"Most distinctly."

"On your own responsibility?"

"On my own responsibility—whatever that may mean."

"Are you aware, sir, that in that case there can be but one termination?"

"If Mr Prescott thinks I have wronged him, of course I am ready to give him proper satisfaction."

"Perhaps, sir, you had better consult some friend. I shall remain at the King's Head, Dene-thorp, and will give you two clear days to consider. If by that time I hear from any friend of yours that you are still in the same mind, or if I do not hear from you at all, I will consider that the rest of this

affair is to be arranged in the only way that will then be open to my principal."

"Will you take any refreshment, Mr Mountain?" He rose to ring the bell.

"Good-day, sir. And I trust you will think better of it by to-morrow."

And so, to add to his difficulties, he found himself engaged in a duel with the rival candidate. "So we may not have to go to the poll after all," he said to himself, and then wrote to an acquaintance of his at the Redcheater Barracks, asking him to meet him the next day.

It will seem at first sight absurd enough that so apparently slight a matter should assume what would be held in these days so serious an aspect. The licence of an election excuses—or at least used to excuse—much hard and even foul hitting. But this case was exceptional, as might very easily indeed be proved were the effusions of Dick Barton fit to appear in type. There is a limit of insult beyond which a candidate for a borough, long-suffering as he must needs be, cannot be expected to stand; and Prescott was not only the reverse of long-suffering, but it was just his sorest corns upon which Barton had deliberately trampled in such a manner that no man, at least in those times, could possibly let the matter pass without resenting it. On the other hand, though Lester entirely disapproved of Warden's proceeding, and was himself entirely innocent, he felt himself bound to support his friend through thick and thin, in respect of what had been done in his own service; and besides, he considered that Prescott was the last man who had any right to complain. At all events, he felt sure that his opponent, even if he had had any just reason for complaint, had not the faintest right to anything approaching an apology, and less even from Warden than from himself: and so he was more than ready to stand by the consequences of refusing to give

one. And so, what with Prescott's very natural anger—seeing that he had been tricked and rendered ridiculous by means of his own weapons—and what with Hugh's chivalrous determination to bear upon his own shoulders the whole responsibility of a proceeding of which he entirely disapproved, only one termination of the quarrel was possible. Indeed, if the truth must be told, his chief feeling about the matter was one of vanity at being engaged in his first "affair."

The next day, Captain Seward—who, by the way, was the last man in the world to counsel peace—conveyed Hugh's final answer to the King's Head; and a meeting was arranged to take place in a convenient meadow about half-way between Denethorp and Redchester.

The interval between a man's first challenge and its result is apt to pass very much as though it were part of a dream; and as such, at least in the case of Hugh Lester, it ought to be described. Nor is the dream altogether of an unpleasant kind, in spite of what sober-minded people may think, when one has hot blood in one's veins, and is convinced that it is the right and chivalrous thing to do. But hot blood is apt to grow feverish, and fevers have their chills. And though love by no means makes a man less inclined to fight, but rather the contrary, it does make a man less inclined to be killed.

He could not help regretting, as he walked about the place at night, on the eve of the meeting, his promise to Monsieur Lefort that he would not attempt to see Angélique, for now it was quite on the cards that he might see her no more—that he might have to leave the world without even bidding her farewell. In answer to his last letter, he had received the slightest and most clandestine-looking of notes, reassuring him of her patience and trust in him; and upon this he had lived for many days. But

now his soul required stronger meat than written words, which had been read and kissed until their sweetness had grown almost stale. And his desire was all the stronger, since it could not possibly be gratified. He had written five letters in case of accident—one, full of explanation and of gratitude, for Miss Clare; one to Warden, full of thanks and exhortations to fight the battle still upon his own account—making him in effect his political heir; one to an old college friend, full of kind remembrances to everybody; one to his servant, full of commissions; and one to Angélique, full of love. But this was but a sorry substitute for what he longed to say and do, after all; and his cigar tasted bitterly. Nevertheless he slept well, and in the morning was as cool and as well prepared as a man who thinks he is doing his duty should always be. In fact, the morning was always his best time.

An early hour had been fixed for the meeting, and he found Captain Seward waiting for him with a trap at the bend of the road beyond the bridge.

They drove off rapidly; and the freshness of the air soon put Hugh into unforced spirits. They had not a very great way to go, and they found themselves the first on the ground.

Presently, however, from the opposite direction, came up another trap, containing Lieutenant Mountain, a surgeon from the barracks, and the great Mr Prescott himself.

Both the captain and the lieutenant were pretty well used to the business; and as the last resort was now inevitable, the forms and ceremonies were got through quickly, and the two opponents were soon in their places, waiting for the signal to fire.

Now, Lester was an admirable shot, and knew it. Of course he did not aim to kill, but he must aim to wing, almost as a matter of self-defence. He fired, but, in order to

avoid the chance of killing, gave himself too wide a margin, and missed altogether.

Had he conspicuously fired wide, his opponent might very likely, under the circumstances, have thought that enough had been done for honour; but, as it was, the latter

having seen the general direction of his adversary's pistol, aimed straight and low.

The next instant Hugh was lying in the arms of the surgeon. The ball had passed into his side, and he seemed, in the eyes of all, to be faint with the faintness of death.

END OF THE FIRST BOOK.

THE OPENING OF THE SUEZ CANAL :

AS COMMUNICATED TO BULLION BALES, ESQ. OF MANCHESTER,
BY HIS FRIEND MR SCAMPER.

PART III.

MY DEAR BALES, — Did it ever occur to you what important illustrations of national character might be obtained from a study of national oaths? I don't mean fantastic expressions, such as Bob Acres' "odds triggers and flints," or Mr Brisk's "let me perish," but the vernacular outpourings of over-charged minds venting themselves otherwise than in goodwill towards men. It has been acutely observed how much ballads have to do with the creation of national sentiments, but nobody, so far as I know, has traced the relation between character and oaths. I will explain why I have begun my letter with the above question. The idea was suggested to me as I lay in bed the morning after the Khedivé's ball at Kasr el Nilo, somewhere between eight and nine o'clock. You will remember that I had retired to rest the same morning between four and five, after being very actively employed for more than twenty-four hours, and you may suppose that, notwithstanding the crowd of thoughts likely to present themselves in my first solitude, I was not long in falling asleep. I slept till after eight, and should probably have done so till after eleven had I been suffered to take

mine ease in mine inn. But fate ordered things her own way; my rest was rudely broken, and it was broken by a *concordia discors* of execrations; that is to say, there was entire concord and unanimity as to the consignment which every railer was making of his neighbour's immaterial and material being, but a harsh, incongruous, and anti-morphic clamour used to express the same. Had I been a rash and irascible man, it is possible that, on being disturbed, I might have offered my mite where so many rich men were casting their gifts into the treasury of condemnation; but being, as you know, a model of self-restraint, I fell to moralising on what I was obliged to hear, and propounded to myself that little theorem concerning oaths and character which I have just passed on to you. I would have preferred to sleep on, it is true, but as to getting into a rage, because in such a place I couldn't, that would have been inexcusable. When young Bailey was supposed to be, like young Lycidas, dead ere his prime, and not to have left his peer, Mrs Gamp observed that "he was born into a wale, and must take the kinsequences of sich a sitiuation;"

and in like manner, as I think, every man who went skylarking to the Suez *fêtes* was bound to take the consequences of whatever situation he might fall into. For my part the *wale* to which I had betaken myself, though not always a smooth and flowery *wale*, had left me with few losses or injuries, and had presented many delights. I began to feel on good terms with Fortune, and was not prone to believe that every little inconvenience was really for my ultimate damage; therefore, I say, I did not fall into great wrath, but lay and rested my limbs, though I could not sleep. Sleep! well, it would have been difficult. The occasion of the row I could pretty well guess. The state of the hotel the evening before gave sure token of what would happen next day. The bells, I fancy, were unanswered, and soon rendered dumb by fierce pulling; the water, too, though raised through pipes (Nile water, Bales), had unfortunately failed that morning (not a very serious privation, by the by, to many of the honourable comminators); boots and clothes were unbrushed; coffee was not forthcoming; all the world had got out of bed on the wrong side, and with one consent was raising its cheerful voice. But as the world is no longer of one speech and of one language, its cheerful voice was of necessity of many sounds, though of very even intensity while it raved. There were shrieks and howls, roars and squalls, gutturals and sibilants, liquids and solids, rolling sonorous oaths, oaths that went off as sharp as crackers, earnest wicked oaths, appealing tragic oaths, despairing oaths, sudden frantic oaths in chorus indicating that the skirt of a *fellah* was seen in the far distance, composite poetical oaths, oaths of sublime simplicity. And there lay I amused, while Chinamen, Germans, Yankee-doodles, Gauls, English, Parthians and Medes and Elamites, Cretes and Arabians, every man in his own tongue,

gave utterance to what Friday called "de great dam."

Well, I lay and thought that if ever again I should know the delights of a winter evening and an easy-chair, I would make a profound philosophic inquiry into the oaths of *all nations*; and you should ask Blackwood, who is, I know, a friend of yours, to give it a place in 'Maga'—will you?

At last the tumult began to subside, the speakers dropped away hither and thither, and a few only of the most eloquent were yet breathing out threatenings. These last, too, died away in low anathemas. The corridors became tolerably quiet, and I could hear the wretched *fellahs* creeping cautiously from their holes and pattering along the floor as they went about their daily work. There was no more chance of quiet, and besides, there was a bright sun shining in at my window; therefore, though they had waked me too soon, I did not slumber again, but got up, and had a refreshing wash—wash, I say—for Bales, my boy, I have not lived in Manchester for nothing. I foresaw that water might be at a premium; and the night before, amid all the hurry of arrival and dressing for the ball, arranged, through a *baksheesh* of one franc, to have a sitz-bath brought then into my chamber, and there filled with Nile water. Oblige me by mentioning this on 'Change—in the hearing of old Pinch, if you can manage it. He got to windward of us in that matter of the maddapolians, but I mean to show him a trick of Egypt when I get back.

Cairo viewed by day proved quite as prepossessing as when viewed by lamp-light. I opened my window and stepped out on the balcony, in my dressing-gown, to reconnoitre. It was a delicious morning, of about the temperature of the English June. Palm-branches stirred gently against the purple sky; groves and plains stretched toward the city from a not very distant horizon;

and mosques and minarets interspersed among high and principally modern houses, all standing, or appearing to stand, among trees and gardens, formed the foreground of a very different landscape from those which met us in the desert. This was my first impression from Grand Cairo; but it was a false and hasty impression, very unlike any of the images of the same renowned city which I have carried away stamped on my brain, to remain there till death us do part. Modern Cairo is no more the Cairo of the mind than Ismail Pasha, in a frock-coat and patent-leather boots, is Haroun al Raschid. In both cases the modern forms are the natural creations of moving time, and possibly great improvements on the old—"but oh the difference to me!"

I needed not, however, to have been so hasty in making my moan over the things of yore. However incompatible past and present may be elsewhere, it is certain that in Cairo they coexist. A turn to your left, ten steps down an alley, and you have gone back six centuries at least, out of the sight of houses five storeys high, with plate-glass windows and gas and water service, into the real presentment of the 'Arabian Nights.' If you *can* be amazed this transition must astonish you. You don't for the moment reflect that it isn't Bagdad, it is so exactly like the Bagdad that you have read and dreamed about. There are the little, close, narrow passages, crowded with Mussulmans, Jews, Greeks, Copts, veiled women, saucy boys, and donkeys, jabbering, shouting, struggling, and staring, despite the filth and stench. There are the tall, old, curiously-built houses, with a little stall on the ground-floor of each, just large enough to hold the proprietor and possibly his man or boy assistant, and some of the wares. It is likely that all the merchandise may be contained in the shop when the vendors are out of it; but while they are there,

room is made for them by ranging half of the stock outside on the door-posts or on little benches. The floors of the *boutiques* are raised a little—say two feet—off the ground; above that level the fronts are all open, with neither doors nor windows. Cross-legged on the floor, with a pipe in his mouth, sits the dealer, if he be an Egyptian, while his assistant arranges wares and recommends them to passengers. A Jew or Greek proprietor may occasionally be seen seated on a chair somewhere about the premises. Many of the trades have their own particular quarters in the bazaar. Goldsmiths and jewellers are all together; silver-smiths have their proper alleys; and silks, cloth-of-gold, and embroidered stuffs, by far the most showy of the merchandise, are congregated in their separate neighbourhood. The less one sees of the places where the necessities of life are sold the better. The butchers', bakers', confectioners', and fruiterers' establishments, having nothing to distract attention from the dirt and meanness, are disgusting. In looking at them it is a comfort to remember that there is a modern Cairo where *your* provisions are bought. Grocers, chemists, medicine-vendors, tobacconists, and chandlers, have none of them very inviting magazines; and as for a bookseller and stationer, I do not remember to have seen such a thing in all the old part of the city. You very soon find out that the gold, silver, jewels, curiosities, and ornamented cloths are the wares that attract you most; to them you go again and again—but one walk through the region of necessities and household stuff will probably suffice. Yet in these latter you find all manner of memories stirred up. You recognise that intelligent cobbler who sewed Cassim's body together, and afterwards, with a bandage over his eyes, found his way through the intricate streets to the very door whither he had once

been conducted blindfold. There he is in his little box, just as he sat when Morgiana accosted him. And, by the by, is not that Morgiana herself that has just walked up to his stall, with a long veil and a fillet round her forehead? Then that doctor's shop, with all its nastiness, can be no other than the shop of Ebn Thaher; and that old party with the turban and yellow slippers must be Ebn Thaher himself, the man who contrived love-meetings for Schemselnihar and the Prince of Persia. The venerable old fruiterer opposite I can also call by name; I have known him for many many years, although I never saw him in the flesh before. He is Abdallah, and he was once very kind to King Beder. Indeed it all looks terribly familiar, suggesting the operation of magic, from the venerable dervish and staid dealer down to the ragamuffin faithful with their clamour, amongst whom you long to see the renowned Cadi appear with his dreaded satellites and the supple wand so effectual in administering the bastinado. But, as I said before, you leave these regions for the gold and jewels, where the paths are by contrast clean. No sooner do you appear than there are fellows at you on each side. For a moment, perhaps, you are distracted, but you recover your Anglo-Saxon self-possession and incline to your right or left without at all knowing which is preferable. The dealer who has got you immediately exhibits his shawls, necklaces, slippers, robes, and so on, recommending the same furiously. You admire them all, but fix your eyes on something, a santal-wood fan perhaps, which you think you will buy. The conscientious tradesman, who has been watching your look, immediately resolves to add about eighty per cent to the price, and asks you three and a half napoleons, assuring you that it will ruin him to part with the article at that figure, but that he has taken a

liking to you, and is resolved that you shall be gratified. You think even the three and a half rather strong; but the vendor, who is an impulsive, open-hearted fellow, rather than you shall be balked, bids you, in Allah's name, take the fan for sixty-five francs—why should two or three miserable livres prevent the dealing? You pay your money, but are not without misgivings that a little more patience and firmness might have procured you a better bargain. There are some indications that you have been mistaken for a flat—as, for example, the gathering of a very importunate crowd around you, and the shoutings of some individuals in that crowd to respectable merchants further on, who, on hearing the shouts, assiduously unlock their caskets and expand their gimcracks. You are a little abashed at first, and show symptoms of hesitation, but, recollecting that this will never do for a free-born Briton among a gang of ignorant savages, you resolve to show the villains that you know what you are about, and that if you suffer yourself to be imposed upon it is only because such is your pleasure. So you swagger suddenly up to a bawling shopman, don't wait for him to entice you, but at once take up a gold necklace, hung with sequins and crescents, and demand the price. "Four napoleons," replies the dealer, who can speak very badly every European language, and has carefully got up his English numerals. "Of course, then, it is gold," you say. "Oh no—silver gilt," replies the just Mohammedan; "if gold, fifteen napoleons," and he spreads out his five fingers three times. This candour rather shakes your resolution; still, for the sake of your own self-respect, you must suggest abatement. Three napoleons, you remark, are quite enough. The seller signifies by a gesture that he is amused by the facetiousness which you are pleased to exhibit. Secretly you waver, but you deem

it expedient not to give in too quickly, so you turn away to some other object and begin to examine it; whereupon the Arab sets to work with diligence, wrapping the necklace in soft paper and packing it in a box of card—you soon see why. He presents the box to you, with a smile, saying, "Give tree." You got off a napoleon any way, but still you think these fellows' prices have a wonderful margin, the extent of which it will be well to ascertain. So you walk on, your crowd of followers having increased, and the shouts sent before you up the alley being louder than before. You want another necklace and so you look at one. Five napoleons are asked. "Two," you say. "Impossible," is the reply. "Two is enough." "No, four." You try your former trick and turn away to other goods. Your diversion is permitted for a moment, but in a minute the necklace is again pushed before you. "Four, cheap!" You turn away impatiently, when a bystander interferes. "Gold, good, four." You turn savagely round at this intruder, who, however, only smiles and enters into an energetic conversation with the master of the shop, then he looks towards you and says persuasively "Tree." This is rather disgusting, and you move away. Your crowd, however, remains, and there is no shouting. You feel yourself almost forsaken as you approach a stall on the other side, where a grave Turk preparing for you takes his pipe from his mouth. But you are not permitted to speak to him at present. Your whole former following moves up, headed by the owner of the last necklace, who holds out the ornament, saying, "Give, give." You are angry, and refuse to be interrupted; you stalk resolutely forward. "Two, give?" persists the vendor. "Go to the devil!" you say. Then the Turk in front comes to your aid and exhibits his treasures. The other fellow is disappointed, and withdraws; but the

gentleman who so kindly interfered in your behalf demands *baksheesh*, which you, if you are wise, administer with your cane. Finally you buy a necklace from the Turk for thirty francs, which is somewhere about its value in Cairo. The crowd come up again, but perceiving that your education has advanced, take part with you now, and enjoy the discomfiture of the traders, whom you treat without ceremony, depreciating their wares, and offering for them a tenth of what they ask.

At one of the stalls I saw a facetious young gentleman who endeavoured to attract custom by his sprightly manners. A circlet for a lady's head, made of gold, purple, and embroidery, caught my attention, and I moved it about with my hand, observing its appearance in different lights; whereupon the youth, pulling off first his turban, and then a linen cap, showed his close-shaven head, and put the circle thereon for me to admire the effect. For this performance he demanded, but did not get, *baksheesh*, neither did he at that time sell the band.

The parade of so much gorgeous stuff in so poor a place produces an effect of barbarous grandeur which is rather impressive. Most likely the same goods exhibited in a commodious, well-fitted European shop, would make a very paltry show. But undoubtedly imagination is busily at work here, and it is much wiser to believe that things are as you see them, than to seek to remove the glamour. Everything in Egypt is more or less enchanted. If the "Nights" were written, as some of the learned have supposed, by an Egyptian or Egyptians, their magic is accounted for. The difficulty in that land is not to believe in marvels.

The night after the ball Cairo was illuminated—rather there were illuminations in Cairo, but they were not general. True to my instincts I desired to see the old part of the city in the glare of artificial light;

and accordingly, after dinner, I again trudged off to the narrow streets. All was gloomy there, however, and as the ways were neither smooth nor clean I found groping my way far from pleasant. After I had walked some time a glare of light appeared in the distance, and a confused noise indicated that something was astir. The light came nearer, and so did a series of loud shouts, which at last took the sound of *Huarda*, *huarda*, as three or four Arabs ran by bearing torches, and were immediately followed by a coach containing several persons, after which came two more torch-bearers. It seemed that something sensational was going on among the natives, for more cries of *Huarda*, *huarda*, and more coaches were soon perceived. Some of these had mounted guards as well as the runners with the torches, and some of them contained ladies from the great harems, whose veils could be seen as the torch-light flashed on them. There being no footway, one had to cling closely to the walls to avoid the tramp and wheels, so I made the best of my way back to broader streets. Ere I was quite out of the ancient region, I saw, in a place where some of the houses and shops were still open and lighted, a turbaned and bearded orator holding forth to a not very numerous nor select audience in front of an uninviting *café*. I remained to listen to him, but of course could comprehend nothing but his earnest delivery and his gestures, with which the hearers seemed much impressed. First I thought he was a political mob-orator, until I reflected that amid all her plagues Egypt was free from this one. Then I imagined that it must be a holy man preaching and giving wisdom by the wayside to irreligious Mussulmans. But it was the things of my former life that were misleading me. What had brawling Radicals or street-ranters to do there in Egypt? No, it

was a very different sort of party, though perhaps of imagination all compact with the disturbers that I first thought of. The fellow was, no doubt, a story-teller, and relating some wonders of love, or war, or enchantment, for the delight of the faithful after the manner of his kind. The ears of (I will not say the unwashed, which is not a very distinguishing epithet in Egypt, but of) the illiterate are regaled with amusing stories instead of sedition or snuffing inspiration. The deeds of Antar, or some other romance, had been preparing the poor men for pleasant dreams and healthy slumber, not sending them home full of envious thoughts and railing accusations, or of terrifying images of Gehenna.

Afterwards I found the illuminations, which hardly repaid me for my tramp. An avenue here and there was brilliantly lighted, but the most luminous place was the great square. Here things looked very gay, and the population were promenading the area and apparently enjoying the amusements, forming little knots round professors of different sciences, all of which I thought but poorly represented. There was a juggler, very slow and with stale tricks; some dancers of a most uninteresting type; some musicians and singers who were a caution; confectioners with forbidding stalls. I was glad to go to bed and sleep.

Not that even this was to be a compensatory night. Five o'clock was our appointed hour of *réveillé*, and an hour before the swearing could begin we were to start for the Pyramids. And it was so: at twenty minutes before five I awoke and lit a candle, shaking off dull sloth; at five o'clock I early rose; at six I stood in the lobby amid sleepers on sofas and in cloaks, who had no holes like the foxes, nor nests like the birds of the air, and who had not been educated up to the Oriental resource of laying their heads in tombs. We were not go-

ing to start in a very great hurry, but our experience of the establishment taught us that an early breakfast, and an early-packed basket of provender, would be achieved with difficulty, if achieved at all. All *was* achieved, though at some expense of time and breath, and while it was yet cool morning we had started for Ghizeh. The drive through the city in the early hours has its peculiar gratification. You see the place far more with its natural aspect at that time than at any other. Very few Europeans are astir; but the Moslems, who are all early risers, are about their usual business. We were scarcely clear of the streets, when, passing under the arch of an aqueduct, we encountered a person of some distinction, Jew or Arab, seated upon an ass and ambling quietly, escorted by a large attendance on foot. He was richly and tastefully dressed, and his long flowing robes, in great measure covering the donkey, saved the rider from the ridiculous appearance which a European so mounted would present. The Sheik or Rabbi, or whatever he was, preserved an entirely dignified mien, and forced you to think of Balaam the son of Beor. Strings of camels passed us laden with long sawn timbers, with casks, with packages; there were oxen and buffaloes in droves; there were country people in troops. A few well-mounted equestrians passed us, but these were exceptional. Most of the travellers were on foot. A good deal of work, such as draining, road-making, and fencing, was going on, the labourers being women and men in about equal proportions. The women, who wore no veils, must have been of a very low class indeed. The country through which we passed was for the most part bearing crops, but was not much varied in feature. The air was still fresh and exhilarating when we reached the village of Old Cairo. Here was pointed out to us a modest Christian church, said to be

the very house in which the Holy Family dwelt when they fled into Egypt. The houses in the village were neat, and adjacent was a large barrack with defensible walls. We were just beginning to find it warm, when, turning sharp to the right and passing a few houses, we saw our way stopped by the Nile. When I saw the river yesternorn, its presence made the pulses leap and set the brain a-spinning; but it might have been the Tagus, or the Esequibo, or the Mersey, or any other full stream, for all the emotion it could produce at present. It was not the stream, but its hither bank, which forced the beholder's attention. The road led down to a narrow strand, all along which, boats as thick as they could possibly lie were packed, with their prows on the beach. It seemed as if nothing could be easier than to hire one of these, shove out, and cross or navigate the river. But it would appear to be a law of Egyptian life that no transaction of the kind shall be effected decently and in order. As land differs from water, so there was a difference between the scene on this beach and that which I witnessed at the Suez railway station; but in respect of the utter confusion that reigned in each, they were the same. There was no wheel nor steam-engine to help the noise on the river's bank, and therefore, probably, it was that the human voice was more freely drawn upon to keep up the requisite clatter in the latter situation. To this day, I cannot conceive what all the discussions were about. There were plenty of passengers wanting boats, and there were plenty of boats wanting passengers; but the difficulty was to get a passenger into a boat. There was no sign that customers and boatmen were making their little bargains. Most of the boats were without men on board; and the owners were pacing up and down the strand, exchanging observations at the top of their voices with every

person whom they encountered. The customers were doing exactly the same thing. How such proceedings could ever end in embarkations I cannot imagine. In the background were the carriages or other conveyances in which some of the company had arrived, carts laden with provisions and merchandise, horses, oxen, and one or two camels; the middle strand was covered by people moving to and fro and talking loudly, as I have above described, and by donkeys; in front, and down a pretty steep and rugged descent, were the boats, unconscious of the row that was being made about them in the world. I never in my life witnessed such an unmeaning scramble. It was something like the motion you observe on first disturbing an ant-hill, only that this never did resolve itself into any order. And as for the noise, there may be some effects of machinery equally disagreeable to the ear, but I don't think that any other human organs could equal it. The comparison of many waters, and so on, would wholly fail: this was a noise of many Egyptians, and like nothing else.

Now my party and I were in no particular hurry, so we waited a while and amused ourselves with the dresses and outcries and incomprehensible motions of the crowd. When we had had enough of these, we did, what I recommend every one to do who may find himself at that perplexing ferry—we desired our donkey-men (who must be engaged on this side) to see to getting the donkeys and themselves across, and then we boarded and took possession of a craft, speaking no word good or bad to any man. After a time, the owners, during a pause in their horrible vociferation, espied us and came on board, with their appetite for jabber painfully excited, and wanted to draw us into foolish disputation, which we, with stern forbearance, declined. We likewise, with sterner forbearance, refrained from knocking them into

the river, and in the end had our heavenly patience rewarded by being pushed away from the land. The waters at this time had more than half subsided, and were of a clear brown colour; but the stream was still strong, insomuch that, with sails and oars together, it was difficult to hit the landing-place on the opposite bank. The island of Rawdah, just below our course of transit, is said, we were told, to be Moses' birthplace—on what authority I am unable to say. A fresh breeze made the water pleasant; but there were not many craft about—a small steamer or two, that was all. Only two or three other boats crossed at the same time with us, and we flattered ourselves that we had got clean away from the Babel on the Cairo bank, the sound of which, sunk to a murmur of confusion, reached us in the mid-channel. But they change their bank, not their affliction, who run across the Nile at this point. On the further shore was another scene of confusion and babbling awaiting us, to get through which, and to find our donkeys and our provender, took us a good half-hour, during which I had an opportunity of examining what looked like a corn-market. In a small square, heaps of different kinds of grain were exposed on sheets—wheat, rye, barley, maize. The wheat, or what was pointed out to me as such, was darker in colour than any that we grow at home, and rounder in the grain. There was no very great quantity, and the sellers appeared to be of the very lowest of the population. Several young girls without veils, and apparently of a very low class, were selling fruit in the same place.

After a certain interval of choosing and mounting, every one of our party was mounted on a donkey. The donkeys are saddled with large soft pads covered with red leather, and, as a general rule, the same saddle may be used by either sex indifferently. The donkey-men

were urgent that our ladies should sit astride, which was of course peremptorily objected to. The difficulty of the saddle was got over somehow, and we started. It is one peculiarity of the donkey-saddle that both stirrups are attached to one long leather running loosely through a groove under the seat. You do well, therefore, to maintain an even balance; for should you allow your weight to incline to one side, the treacherous stirrup will give way, and you may be undonkeyed.

We soon got on to a good broad road, which lasted all the way to Ghizeh. Why we could not have taken our carriages across and driven I never discovered. Donkeys seemed to be the custom of that road, and accordingly it was covered with groups on donkeys. Neither were all ladies scrupulous as to attitude, as some ladies had that day shown themselves to be. Of those we met or passed—and their name was legion—a good half crossed theirsaddles in male fashion. It was observable, too, that a good many gentlemen unsexed themselves to maintain the balance of attitudes, and preserve the eternal fitness of things. These assumed a reciprocal position—one which an old drill-sergeant, once known to me, who was a superficial classic, and got muddled about his *v's*, would have spoken of, in reference to the other, as *visà voce*, meaning, O unsophisticated Bullion, *vice versa*. They let their legs dangle both on one side, and showed how easily they could adapt themselves to any need—that is, half of them were spilt, and the others laughed; afterwards the others were spilt too.

It is time that I gave over this nonsense about donkeys; and, indeed, we were now reaching a point where large thoughts forced their way into the mind. Since we crossed the river we had been jogging along very merrily across marshes, and cultivated land, and canals, seeing not much worthy of remark in the

husbandry or the landscape, and excessively merry and noisy, when suddenly we were aware of the presence of the three Pyramids, and interrupted our mirth like chidden infants. The skirts of past time were looming over us; the religion of the place overcame us. These were the precincts of pre-eminent antiquity, where the spirits of departed centuries gather round the oldest existing works of man.

Perhaps I had formed an extravagant idea of the effect which the Pyramids would produce by their size, for the size did not at first impress me much. Indeed I thought, when first we began to see them plainly, we must be further distant than we proved to be. Another half-hour of expectation and urging of donkeys, and a turn to the right up a rather steep ascent, brought us face to face with the work of Cheops!

My first perception was of an effort of mind to take in the truth of what I saw. Our minds at home are pretty well educated to the comprehension of antiquities such as we in Europe possess, and I think we habitually associate the ideas of old things with fragments, rottenness, damp weeds, and pity for fallen greatness. It is not easy, then, for a mind so trained to believe that these solid structures, compact, symmetrical, and uninjured, save by scratches of barbarism, belong to a period in comparison of which the birth of all our ruins was but as yesterday—to believe that, though they can still challenge Time and Vandal, they are little younger than Day and Night! Now, I say, Bales, that this is a thing hard to be understood—I say that, when you look at the strong, regular Pyramids, with their massive blocks and even joints, you come short of their greatest significance till you have reflected that the world's whole history—its empires, its wars, its religions, its works, its knowledge,—all that it still possesses, and the greater all that it has lost for ever,

—have come into existence since Cheops and his fellows wrought the mighty masonry which is now confronting you. When I thought of the works of all succeeding men, the passage, once and twice put aside, would suggest itself again, not profanely, "They shall perish, but thou shalt endure; they all shall wax old as doth a garment;" but for the Pyramids, there they stand, the testaments of those nourished in nature's youth: must we call them the excellency of her strength; or has she since reared, and will she rear again, such strong men as Cheops and Chephrenes and Mycerinus? Well, we have some portion of their spirit in us now if we may say no more. Men of the nineteenth century have pierced the Isthmus from sea to sea, and these at least may stand in the shadow of the Pyramids and not be ashamed.

There was a crowd of visitors at Ghizeh that day, and the face of the great Pyramid was covered with climbing tourists and the Arab assistants. This was hardly an advantage, but a traveller ought to be able to make his own uses of what he sees, independently of the proceedings of others; and indeed it was interesting to observe how little the solemnity of the mass was disturbed by the escalade of two or three hundred human insects, many of whom clearly knew and cared nothing about the pile, except as a thing to be ascended and descended.

I saw one gentleman who had escorted two ladies to the top and back refreshing them and himself after the labour. He was beaming with satisfaction, having done Cheops the distinguished honour of inscribing the name, Thomas Smith, on the apex. "I done it well; it was on the very top—damme, there couldn't be none higher," observed Mr Smith, in strong Lancashire, as he wiped the Bass foam from his lips with the sleeve of his coat. All the world, however, does not refresh after the manner of Mr Smith. For the poor

ignorant *foreigner*, who, perhaps when Egypt is twice as old as she now is, will hardly have been educated up to the appreciation of treble X, there were water-carriers, with long jars of ancient figure, slung like quivers across their shoulders. Each jar had a metal tube projecting from its mouth, so as to be about three inches higher than the carrier's shoulder; and when any wretched devil of a water-drinker desired to moisten his clay he bought a draught, which the waterman drew cleverly by giving his left shoulder a certain twist into a position which allowed the water to run over the shoulder and be caught in a glass or cup which he held before his breast.

The whole neighbourhood is covered with sand, but the sand is not sufficiently deep in the hollows to entirely efface the features of the ground. There is a fall north and south from the Pyramids, and you go down a sandy wearying road to find the valley in which the Sphinx is half buried in sand. I am sorry to say that the nose of this monster has been very roughly handled, and that the features generally are much damaged. It was told me that the Mamelukes used to make the figure a target for musket-practice—the wretches! The back and haunches are still clear of sand, but the paws and the entrance to the temple, which is between the fore legs, are invisible. There was a rumour that Ismail was about to have the whole figure cleaned for the Emperor's inspection, but this was never done while I could benefit by it, if it was done at all.

You need a veil while you traverse this ground, and, if the wind will allow you, you should spread your umbrella, as the sun is very hot. I carried my umbrella for some time, but in turning the north-west angle of the Pyramid it was caught by a little whirlwind and turned inside out in an instant, while my eyes and mouth were filled with sand. The inside of the

Pyramid is insufferably hot. You scramble down a very steep descent and arrive at the sarcophagus-chamber, which is all that you can reach except with extraordinary means, and then you find the Arab's candle or torch to be next to useless, and you see nothing to reward your exertion, but are glad to return to cooler air and daylight.

Unless you go to measure or explore, the sight is soon seen. Such vast objects are easily taken in by the eye: it is by the mind that they are long of comprehension. We did not tarry near them late in the day, but it was absolutely necessary to rest and refresh a little after our survey. And while sitting in the shade, I thought how much the great builders had been assisted by the climate. Even these huge structures must have presented a very different appearance had they stood so long in a more northern latitude. Our stoutest granite yields in time to the weather; and we see castles and cathedrals ruined by the decomposition of the stone after a few hundred years, and the images of crusaders fairly washed from their tombstones. But this consideration ought not to diminish in our eyes the achievements of the Egyptian builders. It is only fair to credit them with a full knowledge of the means at their disposal, and their fitness for the end in view. In a country where stone must perish, men who would emulate Cheops must hit on some other method of keeping their memory whole for thousands of years.

Well, Bales, I have looked on the Pyramids of Ghizeh, and have carried away recollections that shall afford me pleasant thought to the end of my days. We were a very sober party when we set out on our return to Cairo; but we met troop after troop of visitors, all hastening to the scene which we had just left, and little by little we became pretty lively again. On the way we halted to see a garden-palace of the Khedivé, built

in the style of the Alhambra, and exceedingly beautiful. The grounds in which it stands are tastefully and elaborately laid out with grottoes, terraces, and artificial water. There was profusion of flowers and fruits, many of which were gathered and offered to us by the attendants. After loitering here for half an hour we reached the gates of another palace, and entered the enclosure, as we were permitted to do everywhere, that we might look at the building and grounds. This was clearly a residence, as there were servants in the viceregal livery in the colonnade, and other signs of habitation. As we walked up through the parterre in front, we came upon a strong gang of labourers making some alterations in the drives and fences. They were working under a taskmaster, who bore a strong stick, and continually laid it on when things were not done exactly to his liking. We wished to see the interior of the palace, and on requesting to be allowed to do so were told that if we had come a little earlier we might certainly have entered; but the Emperor, to whom this palace was assigned during his visit, was expected back from a drive immediately. "Indeed here he comes," said the officer to whom we had applied; and we had barely time to withdraw to the other side of the drive when the Emperor and Crown-Prince drove up in a low carriage and alighted, their suite coming up in two or three similar carriages. Nobody seemed to resent our lounging about the domain, and the great personages very graciously returned our salutation before they passed in. Of course we now left the front drives; but not the least objection was made to our visiting the gardens in rear and the stables, after looking at which we moved off towards the river to engage a passage across, as fortunately we were not to return by that babel near Old Cairo. Some of the party, however, who

had lingered about the precincts of the palace, came now running to call us back, and to tell us that we would all be sent over in a boat of the Khedivé's. Accordingly, we returned, and embarked by a private stair on board a small steamer, which speedily transported us to the other side, where we found carriages, and were taken to our hotel, after a very fatiguing but most delightful day's excursion.

I went with a party to see Cairo races. We reached the course with difficulty, seeing that the last mile of our drive thither was over some remarkably heavy ground, without trace of a road, where the horses gave in repeatedly, and across which we should scarcely have had the will to proceed had we not seen the world of Cairo all zealously toiling through the same slough. By dint of whip and coaxing we established ourselves at last opposite the grand stand, and released for a while our unfortunate horses. The attendance was worthy of better sport; there was much beauty and much European fashion, and such a mingling of the costumes of all nations in carriages and on horseback as composed a very gay scene. The stand was well filled, and everything seemed got up for the occasion with much care; the course, however, looked heavy. Tickets had been presented to us for this as for most other amusements. I should mention that before the racing began there was a field-day of the Khedivé's troops on a further part of the plain. About five thousand of all arms turned out and manoeuvred for a short time very respectably. Service in the army seems to be here the best instead of the worst calling that a man can take to; and I have an idea that these Egyptian troops would be effective in the field. It is quite clear that they are heartily endeavouring to be so, and that they are conforming to the best European usages as far as their religion and customs will allow. Their

music is rather barbarous, so far as I had opportunity of judging; and I suppose it was their best military bands that attended at the race-course, and gave us the Emperor's hymn as the Emperor and Khedivé came on to the course, and afterwards maltreated a number of favourite pieces. One of the early races, and I think the one best worth winning, was gained by a horse of the British Consul-General—a plate of £300. But all the races were very slow affairs, not excepting the camel-race, which for its novelty I waited to see. It was a stupid business, the most interesting part of which was to observe how the Arab riders endured the jolting of the long trot. The race was, if I remember rightly, three miles, and after the first round of the course, the four or five camels that started were so far asunder that all interest in the competition was at an end. I left the course before the sports had well reached their height, and went back into the city to procure a little cash, of which somehow or other I had run very short. At the Bank of the Delta, or some other bank where I presented my circular note (for I have forgotten the name of the establishment, though I could find their house of business readily enough), one of the clerks, reading my name, came up to his little wicket and made a keen survey of my countenance. Then he said, "Mr Scamper, from Manchester, is it?" to which I replied that I came from Manchester. "Ah, sir," said he, "I remember you well, and Mr Bales; I hope he is still flourishing. Sharp business man that, and no mistake!!" It was that young fellow Keene, whom we thought a little too much interested in that Cleansweep absconding business. Well, you see how these men get on; he has got a red beard and mustache now, and is a person of some consequence, I can tell you.

I was going straight home with my bag of money, when at a street-

corner a little wretch who appeared to be deformed, his chest projected so, ran up and asked *baksheesh* in the usual way. As I bore down upon him without paying the least attention to his petition, he had to skip aside; but in another instant he was again before me, and putting his hand into his bosom he drew out a snake about a foot long, and put it on the pavement right in my path. It was my turn to skip aside now, and I did so before the shock of so unexpectedly seeing the reptile had passed. Immediately the urchin drew out another snake and placed it by the first. I was composed enough now to look at them, though from a respectful distance, and I marked the beautiful way in which the two snakes made their contortions in exactly parallel curves, as if they had been drilled to it. After betraying this much of interest in the little villain (whom even the fastidious *Saturday* will probably allow me to call a street Arab), I felt bound to give *baksheesh*. When he put out his hand to receive my donation, I looked behind the front of his only garment into his bosom. He wasn't deformed; he had a nest of about fifty snakes there—asps of the Nile, for anything I know. They made my blood run cold.

With all the vigour which the Government exhibits and inculcates, there is, somehow, an immense idle population in Cairo. Idle fellows are about everywhere. They seem ready enough to get a job; but whether they would take to continuous labour, and whether they could get it if they would, are questions which I have not solved. They seemed exceedingly sharp, and a great number of them could express themselves, after a fashion, in three or four foreign tongues. The little ragamuffins remind one exceedingly of the Neapolitan small fry. The boys are much better looking than the girls; children of both sexes have the most beautiful teeth and gums I ever saw. Except at

the ball at Ismailia, I never heard of any of our party losing so much as a handkerchief; and it was worthy of remark not only that everything turned up right in the end, but that people who got the chance handling of our property took careful note of what they received, and gave an account of all when their service was done. I feel certain that they are not all naturally rogues, though they are not registered Al in respect of honesty; and that though they may be idle and thriftless (I have no proof that they are so), there is the making of a fine people in them. The Arab villages are the most shocking places I ever saw. The houses, if houses they may be called, are simply shelters of the very meanest construction—very little above the lairs of beasts. There was not the slightest sign of any household property—not even of a bed. I fancy that the shaggy garments which they wear serve them for night as well as day; indeed it is clear, by many infallible signs, that, like the laws of the Medes and Persians, they never *can* be changed. Their cooking, such as it is, is done out of doors: washing may be left altogether out of the account.

My visit to the noted Citadel occupied a morning very pleasantly. As a place of strength there is not much in these days to be said for it; but as occupying commanding ground it deserves the praise of enabling those who enter it to enjoy a glorious panorama. The city, old and young, the Nile, the green fields, the ranges of hills, the palm-trees, the desert, all bathed in that purple atmosphere which I have so often spoken of, and stretching away into distances which show no horizon, but fade into a rosy cloud, afford a series of sights which delight by some influence beyond their mere grandeur or beauty. There is witchcraft about the whole sight; a charm hangs not so much over the landscape as over you, the

beholder, which, while it makes you thoroughly enjoy, keeps suggesting that it is an unsubstantial pageant, a glorious vision from which you will awake. Believe me it is very delicious idleness to wander about these heights; but there are other things to be seen besides the views. One of the buildings contains a large hall, rich in ornament and of dazzling brilliancy, with that fairy-palace appearance so often met with in the East. At first I thought it was a mosque, from seeing many believers at their prayers and prostrations, but I believe it was only that the hour of prayer happened to arrive while I was there; for when, by the voice of the muezzin or other signal, they are made aware that the time has come, they commence their devotions without regard to place or spectator.

A bronze gate, backed by a rich curtain on your right as you enter the hall, indicates that there is some inner apartment. A Mussulman presents himself with a key in his hand, and, after receiving *bakshesh*, opens the gate. You enter and find yourself in a well-lighted and rather gay-looking room, in the centre of which stands the tomb of Mehemet Ali, the first viceroy. The tomb itself is of marble, very rich, and highly ornamented. It was a rather different looking place from one of our sepulchral vaults, Bales.

One of the sights of the Citadel is *Joseph's Well*. The tourist who has not properly primed himself is apt to prick up his ears at this name, and to fancy that he has struck the trail of the patriarch who, he knows, got fourteen years with hard labour somewhere here-about for going abroad insufficiently dressed. Was the digging of this well, then, the substitute for the crank and the mill? Is it the living record of how Joseph and his butler and baker fellow-sufferers were made to toil when their feet were hurt in the stocks and the iron entered into their souls? Or is it a great achievement of Joseph in

after years, when, having passed triumphantly through the terrors of adversity and the prison, and the still more dreadful outrages to which the unprotected male was in that day subject, he was governor over all the land of Egypt, and wielded its mighty labour power? Pooh! not a bit of it. The Joseph who made the well and gave his name thereto is a very different person from the great interpreter of dreams, and yet he is an old acquaintance, too, as you will own at once if I call him by his other name of Saladin. It was that renowned Moslem who dug the well, and he dug it nearly three hundred feet deep, down to the level of the Nile; the object being, of course, to secure water-supply for the garrison in case of siege. A winding gallery descends round and round the well from the top to the base, having windows at certain levels looking into the well. To get up this spiral incline is rather a stiff pull.

I could not loiter here as I was tempted to do, my time being short, but had to start off, regardless of dust and heat, to visit the tombs of the pachas. These are in a large building all raised above the ground, and well lighted. Each tomb is built up in two or three tiers, the large block at the base being, as I understood it, merely a pedestal, the centre and somewhat smaller block containing the body, and the uppermost and smallest block being solid. The tombs are of marble, and richly gilt and painted, the inscriptions being, of course, in Arabic. From the foot of each rises a marble pillar, on the top of which is a device announcing the rank and sex of the personage who sleeps below. A fez indicates a pacha. Ladies and princes have their separate signs. Many tombs are covered with baize or holland as a protection from the dust. There are two or three large chambers full of these tombs.

From the tombs we went into the

city to see different mosques, before entering which they made all of the masculine gender take off our boots. Ladies—not, of course, from a feeling of gallantry, but because an unveiled woman moving about at her pleasure bothers them entirely, and is a thing which their laws and regulations do not recognise—are allowed to keep their feet covered. The mosques are not very splendid, but some of them appear to be very old. The interiors of most are almost empty. A wooden pulpit stands against the wall, and the floors are handsomely laid. In one we saw through an iron grating some very sacred spot (whether a tomb or not I could not learn), where perpetual prayer is made day and night by a succession of priests, each of whom remains on duty for a set time, and is then relieved by another. In another mosque was the tomb of Ali's sister, a very sacred place, fenced round with bronze railings, which the people approached and kissed devoutly as the toe of the black St Peter is kissed at Rome.

When I could command an hour or two I liked to spend them in the wonderful old bazaars where nothing seems to become obsolete. The gold bazaar, for instance, is a labyrinth of close dirty alleys and foul puddles where you may very soon lose yourself. In these dark, mean, and intricate passages, where, with extended arms, you may touch both sides at once, and where a donkey can hardly pass, are collected the jewellers and working goldsmiths, who, some workmen and some merely sellers, are doubled up in their little boxes as the shopmen are in the fancy bazaar. Here, however, there is no display of dazzling wares to conceal the poverty of the region. You must ask for what you want, and when

you do so a dreadfully dirty Turk unlocks a safe which you have not before seen, and produces ornaments in plenty, or offers to make them to order. Ornaments for the person were what seemed most to abound, and these not of a very elaborate or expensive description. But it was the quaint old place that was so well worth seeing, the gossiping idle population, the crowd, mixed up with donkeys, pushing through the gates and ways, which are exactly of the same class as those which lead to life, and which so few discover. A walk hither makes you quickly understand how Haroun, and Mesrour, and Giafar found out, by personal observation, so much of what was going on in Bagdad. They had only to elbow their way through places like this to understand a great deal of everybody's business. I never saw anything that resembled the body of a lady in a sack on its way to the river; but there were Sindbads and Hindbads in plenty, barbers and barbers' brothers, all ready to talk, hunchback tailors, Jewish physicians, and here and there a jovial-looking fellow, with a merry twinkle in his eye, who might be Abon Hassan, the Arabian Christopher Sly. And, in answer to Master Doubloon Bales's criticism, be good enough to inform that ingenious youth that the 'Thousand and One Nights' belong as much to Egypt as to Arabia or Persia, and are understood to describe Arab life in one as much as in the other. If he can get hold of the edition of 1846, of the Rev. E. Forster's translation, he may there read in the Introduction, that Mr Lane, the writer on Egypt, considered the author or authors to have been Egyptian. It would appear, however, that many of the purely Egyptian stories are lost.* We have Cairo, nevertheless, introduced in

* "This traveller (Dr Clarke) obtained a transcript of the 'Arabian Nights,' which was brought to him in four quarto cases, containing one hundred and seventy-two tales, separated into one thousand and one portions for recital during the same number of nights. This valuable acquisition was unfortunately lost, an event

the story of Ali Cogia, and the scene of the adventures of the Prince and the King of the Genii is Cairo. He is a sharp lad, that Master Doubloon, but, as Mr Weller said to the young gentleman in the hairy cap, "He'd better not show that fine edge too often, in case anybody was to take it off." There was one race of caliphs here, Fatimites, I believe, who exercised all the authority, spiritual and temporal, of the Bagdad and Damascus caliphs, until they degenerated, and the last of them was dethroned by Saladin, who assumed the royal but not the sacerdotal office, he having no pretence to the latter, as he could not claim to be in any way related to the Prophet. The tombs of these caliphs and their families may be seen to the east of Cairo. They are plain in comparison with those of the pachas, and are erected in small mosques, each mosque containing three or four tombs. They date from the tenth to the twelfth century, and neither buildings nor tombs are very carefully preserved. One large hall near the caliphs' tombs is fitted all round with large strong doors, very securely closed, except one pair of folding-doors, which I saw open. They, when shut, concealed a series of shelves reaching almost to the roof, on which, no doubt, had rested the bodies of true believers, but which were empty now, except for some fragments of wood which lay about. Whether the closed cupboards were likewise empty or were full I could not discover. The door of this chamber is of massive iron, and presents a most imposing parade of security. The fastening is a short stick run through the staples, which any child may remove at pleasure. The great burying-place of the city is here, where the caliphs lie; and there are tombs of all classes, some

highly-ornamented buildings, some plainer sepulchres, and the great mass simple graves, each, however, having its distinguishing mark of the family, or trade, or sex of the tenant.

On the way back from the necropolis, I passed through the horse-market and the camel-market, both exceedingly unsavoury places. The jades in the former were pitiable creatures, fit only for the kennel. Of the camels I could not judge, but I should not think any that I saw there a very valuable or desirable animal. Had there been more spare time and less aroma, I would have waited to observe some of the dealing.

The On of Scripture has been identified by the learned with Heliopolis. Every traveller makes a day's excursion from Cairo to pay this ancient place a visit, and in one sense goes over it, but nevertheless does not see very much—not even ruins. What, then, has become of the city that it should so utterly have perished? Well, a great deal of it, we are informed, is just where it was, and the reason why we cannot see it when we go there is, that it is under our feet. The fate of the cities of the plain—volcanoes, earthquakes, Vandals—are suggested to the European mind when this fact is stated, but a minute's reflection suffices to determine that their agency has not operated here. There has been no violent outbreak of nature, no sudden visitation of divine wrath, no barbarian irruption to blot out ancient On. The cause of its disappearance is a phenomenon as regular in its occurrence as the rising and setting of the sun—a power that has wrought steadily since the days of Noah. Egypt truly is, as Herodotus said, the gift of the Nile, but she is not a sudden munificence,

which is the more to be regretted because many of the tales related to Syrian and Egyptian customs and traditions, which have not been found in any other copy of the same work."—From 'A View of Ancient and Modern Egypt,' by the Rev. M. Russell, LL.D.

a capricious endowment. Since its first act of bounty in the youth of time the river has never ceased to give; if it should cease, Egypt would be one desert. We know how year by year the revivifying waters overspread the land, and we ought to reflect that the fertilising slime then deposited is every year an addition to the soil of the Delta—a thin layer almost inappreciable as a unit, but very effectual when multiplied by a hundred or a thousand. In the course of centuries, then, the gift of the Nile, overspreading year by year the site of the old city On, has at length buried its buildings and remains. The account given to me stated that Heliopolis stood on undulating ground, and that the present general level is at the height of its greatest eminences. Possibly it may hereafter be thought worth while to disinter these interesting remains, but until that is done the traveller's visit to the place will be to little purpose. The most striking object there is the obelisk, dating probably from the reign of Amenemes of the XIIth dynasty. It stood before the great temple of Athom or the sun, and is all that now remains of that great temple, parts of which have been carried to Rome and to Constantinople. The obelisk is inscribed on three faces with hieroglyphics, to this day perfectly sharp and distinct, and is said to bear the name of Osortasen or Sesortasen.

Not far from the obelisk is the tree known as Mary's sycamore. It is large and spreading, and doubtless very old; but whether so old as the flight of the Holy Family into Egypt, as we were told it is, may be doubted. It has been climbed so often that there are now established tracks up the trunk and along the branches. By this very scale I mounted and examined its parts. I found that I followed in the footsteps of a very literary crowd of predecessors, the interesting facts of whose visits were re-

corded on the bark. On this occasion England did not appear to have all the glory to herself, as beside the names of the celebrated travellers William Smith and John Jones appeared those of Alphonse Blancbec, Karl Schaffkopf, Giovanni Battista Scioccone, and of several other distinguished Europeans.

It may have appeared to you, Bales, an omission that, writing to a man of such well-known reverence for facts and figures, I have never mentioned the difference of height between low and high Nile. It would have appeared still stranger to you if you had been here with me and witnessed the extreme difficulty which I experienced in finding any one who knew or cared about it. The rise of the river is the event of the year on which their very lives depend, and yet to find information so hard of access! The Egyptians are said to be kept purposely in the dark by their Government, which keeps a meter, and issues notices of the rise so notoriously fabricated for fiscal purposes, that perhaps the mystified natives have given up in despair the attempt to be well informed. This does not account for the indifference on the same subject of Europeans, of whom many that I chanced to fall in with could tell me nothing on the subject, and others told what was incorrect. Of course I made it out at last. It is 25 English feet, more or less, at Cairo; higher up the stream the rise is from 35 to 48 feet; while at the mouths it is scarcely 4 feet. "A nilometer," says Sir Gardner Wilkinson, "stood at Eileithyias in the age of the Ptolemies; there was one at Memphis, the site of which is still pointed out by tradition; that of Elephantine remains with its scales and inscriptions recording the rise of the Nile in the reigns of the Roman emperors; a movable one was preserved in the temple of Serapis at Alexandria till the time of Constantine, and was afterwards transferred to a

Christian church; the Arabs in 700 A.D. erected one at Helwan, which gave place to that made about 715 by the Caliph Suleyman in the Isle of Roda, and this again was succeeded by the 'Mekeas' of Mamoon, A.D. 815, finished in 860 by Motawukkal - al - Allah, which has continued to be the Government nilometer to the present day."

I never half drank my fill of the sights and doings of Cairo; for before we were well aware or in any way willing to go, came the inevitable day of departure. Somehow hearts don't get very heavy in that atmosphere, but still it was difficult in preparing for our exodus to keep the spirits up to anywhere near concert-pitch. Indeed it was rather a piece of luck for the said spirits that they got moved as they did by the sight of some highly-imaginative accounts which the manager of the hotel had by this time become sufficiently tranquil to compose. The friend with whom I travelled to Cairo, and with whom I purposed to proceed to Alexandria, had an instinctive foreknowledge that the merits of these productions could not be fully appreciated at one perusal, especially such a perusal as we might be able to give them at parting. He therefore pressed on the publication of the interesting documents, and by dint of some salutary threatenings as to non-payment, succeeded in bringing them to light. When they did appear, wrath for a time displaced regret, our great minds descended to the details of filthy lucre, and we dissected the whole of these arithmetical delusions. Rising from this great council we rent every one his clothes, and decreed that the man who had done this thing should surely die. Which, translated into the barbarisms of the West, Bales, does not mean that we desired the death of the sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness

and lower his demands. To the better attainment of which end we besought my friend and travelling companion to put lance in rest on behalf of us the lambs, and to do battle with the wolf. Right manfully did he fulfil his *devoir*: he had some experience of the lupine nature, and like *Anna Soror* blarneying the pious *Aeneas*,* or Mrs Todgers decimating the veal cutlets, he selected for his attack the tenderest places in the manager's system, who, nothing daunted, threw before his body his warlike shield of brass. Our champion did valiantly, pressing the foe till he had to abandon his items one by one, and making havoc with his sixes and sevens:—

"In single opposition, hand to hand,
He did confound the best part of an hour
In changing hardiment;"

by the end of which time the wolf surrendered at discretion. Every one of us benefited largely by the result of this encounter. I got relieved, I remember, of a heavy percentage; and an Italian gentleman, whom the wolf had marked for a peculiar prey, profited to the extent of one-third of a heavy bill. So this little episode and the thought that we had got the settling done overnight was some comfort.

Getting to the railway was not an easier or pleasanter operation than getting from it had been. We had, however, daylight for the former; and if I were to describe to you the babel at the booking-office, I should only repeat the descriptions of Egyptian babels with which I have formerly seasoned my epistles, save in this respect, that the last babel was under cover, and in a confined space—a thrice confounded confusion, the science of obstructiveness brought to perfection, the most involved disorder, and the most distracting uproar of which human nature is capable. It was a serious look-out this time, too, for there was no unlimited de-

* "*Sola viri mollis aditus et tempora noras.*"—*Æneid*, IV.

lay; the train was intended to start punctually—that is to say, within three quarters of an hour or an hour of the time prescribed—wherefore we had need of circumspection, and, after using our utmost efforts, narrowly escaped being left behind. Our seats were at last obtained, but the means by which we got them would not have stood a severe scrutiny. I am afraid that bribery and corruption, and intimidation amounting to personal chastisement, might have been so plausibly imputed, that nothing but the verdict of an independent and enlightened jury offered the least chance of establishing our innocence, and that palladium is not to be found here. *Baksheesh* and cowhide are very coarse machinery. I grant you, Bales, that we do things more politely in the West, carefully withholding the mirror from nature, and never shocking vice with the sight of her own image.

The journey to Alexandria occupied, as well as I remember, five hours. We reached the city by daylight, found letters, and found also our steamer and our friend the courteous skipper. There was enough of the day left to view rapidly Cleopatra's Needle, Pompey's Pillar, and the Catacombs; also to find out what manner of place Alexandria is. It surprised me agreeably. I had heard an unfavourable report of it, and did not quite see what its great offences are. It is well laid out, and has some good streets and squares. I did not try a hotel, but several that I saw looked large respectable establishments; there were also some good shops. The roads certainly are not well kept, as we were painfully certified when we drove a little way into the country. For all that, the drive was pleasant, as the groves and gardens looked fresh, and the parching influence of the desert was not so hard to keep at bay. I find they have rain here occasionally, the law of drought not

extending to the sea-coast. Indeed I knew by many symptoms that I was being gradually disenchanted, that the hues and softness of fairy-land were fading, and the hard rugged outlines of the work-a-day world becoming more and more apparent. I lay down that night in my cabin full of regrets, it is true, but with those regrets blunted and corrected by the thought of how much I had been refreshed in mind and body, and by the retrospect of all that I had been seeing and doing. The ceaseless activity of Egyptian life almost forbade reflection, which came now as a new if a more sober pleasure. How delightful it is to let the boiling chaos of ideas wherewith you are charged settle down, and separate and take lifelike shape, and remould itself in pictures for the memory! But the digestive process is a sleepy one: instead of the feverish expectation which had visited me my first night in Egypt, came, on this my last, the soothing draught of fruition. Amid spectres of turbans, ships, camels, sheiks, banners, sphinxes, railway officers, donkeys, porters, veiled figures, tombs, and palm-trees, I went quietly and soundly to sleep, my last confused vision being of the lively *capitano*, who, with his countenance expanded to colossal dimensions, was pulling away at a huge cigar, shaped like a pyramid, but not smoking very successfully, and his lungs appeared to be failing, when suddenly the hadji, armed with a railway lever, having at its end a ball as big as the moon, inserted the same into the back of his head, which thereupon became an air-pump, and was exercised by the hadji until the whole delicate weed was ablaze. I forgot to tell you that we left the *capitano* in Egypt. I wonder if I shall ever see him again!

With morning and breakfast came the knowledge that we were likely to have a limping voyage back to Italy, for the bumping and lurching which I mentioned to you

as having occurred a little before we reached Suez had been attended with the fracture of two blades of our screw. It was now supposed that some heavy piece of iron—part of a dredging-machine perhaps—had been left sticking in the bed of the Canal, and that our evil fortune had sent the screw against it. The steamer had, of course, gone back by the Canal, and from Port Saïd to Alexandria, where we found her waiting. It was not very cheering to see three or four ships drop into port all after time, and considerably tumbled, and giving sad accounts of the weather outside. We had to face whatever might betide; and, truly, as we brought our anchor up, things looked as smooth and sunny as they had been lately looking. But the inevitable hour had struck. We had loosed from Alexandria, and were gently floating down the harbour amid the freight-ships and the ships of war of all nations, the shore looking unreal and purple as before, and the city and the shipping flashing back the rays of the sun. We disengaged from the anchorage, and, with more way on, still stretched out our hands to the receding coast, rich with legend and relic, and with the ineffable gramarye of old, old Time. We saw the hills break into headlands, and the heavy batteries armed with cannon cast on English ground frowning down upon us as we neared the sea. And then the distance began to lend literally enchantment to the view. The mists gathered, but they were the haze of commingling rainbows, not murky vapours nor sullen shrouds. The lights from minaret and lattice and gilded vane still reached us through the

tinted ether; and the outlines of palaces and streets and hills, glorified by distance, but distinct and warm and fair, watched over our departure and dissolved unwillingly as we were borne away. All merged at last in one soft variegated cloud. I knew not when I last distinguished an object, or when the scene became but one commixture of mellowed hues; neither could I say when the last fleck of colour waned and a grey sky spake of tempest and of travail.

Thus in soft light, like to the hue of youth, disappeared the witching pageant; thus passed Egypt from the sight of eyes that shall behold her face again no more. I am glad that I have looked on her, that I have made though but a few hasty strides on her soil, that I have exchanged fancies for realities, and that I have memories in place of dreams. And, as the wind raised its first whistle through the cordage, and the first billow became crested with foam, I said farewell to her who had afforded me a few gilded days, and felt a desolation as I turned from her. Ancient of Days, Enchantress, long-descended Queen, Farewell!

And now, Bales, it is a snorer; the white horses are tumbling about, and the good ship, as she cleaves a billow, quakes as if in a convulsion. If anything can be sure, it is certain that she will exercise us this night. But and if she take us once more out of the boiling surge and within reach of land, then by these presents you will learn, my dear Bales, the safe return to Europe of

Yours, through good and ill,

SCAMPER.

IN FEBRUARY.

1870.

UPON the vigil of Saint Valentine
 I dreamed, but not in sleep, that Thou and I
 Had drifted backward o'er the gulf of days
 That part us from three hundred years ago.
 Wherefore and how I cared not : for I knew
 That Thou wast still unchanged, yea for all
 That now Thou worest ruff and farthingale,
 While I, in velvet pile and plumèd cap
 Proclaimed Thee first with sword as well as pen—
 Such were our parts in Fancy's Masquerade.
 And then I thought, what homage shall I pay
 My Lady when she wakes to-morrow morn
 More than all other mornings of the year ?
 I would not give her, as was then the wont,
 Aubade or serenade, for shame it were
 To wake her from the summer of her dreams,
 That needs must be of all things bright and fair,
 And to recall her to this frosty world :
 Nor was there trafficking in common forms,
 Three hundred years ago, of flowery rhyme,
 Garnished with Cupids and with suchlike things,
 That all who list may purchase by the score
 For any Kate or Bess or Jill or Joan :
 For, in those days, the ritual of the saint
 Was no mere carnival of compliments—
 Things that should never pass 'twixt me and Thee.
 And so I thought and thought until the dream
 Grew clear : until I saw that I should speak
 Unto your eyes words that were only mine,
 Made in the fashion of those olden days
 For you, dear Lady, and for you alone :
 Until just simply from my heart I spake
 And dreamed that Thou didst listen and believe
 The words I spake : and then I woke, and found
 The song I send Thee. Take it : and believe

Albeit my Strengthe to praise Thee be not fitte,
 And eke to singe I have but shalowe Witte,
 Yette that the olden Guise in whiche 'tis writte
 Is Mirrour of the Truthe that is enshrined in Itte.

1570.

TO MY MOSTE DERE LADYE :

A VALENTINE.

When triumphing midde Froste and Raine
 The Birdes are faine to singe,
 And faire Sainte Valentine againe
 Makes Winter dreame of Springe :

Then as the Yere doth laughe with Love
To thinke on Summer Dayes,
Eche Hearte that loves it doth behove
To singe His Ladye's Praise.

For pooreste Love hath then the Power,
When biddes Sainte Valentine,
Thoughe lowlie be His chosen Flower,
To make it seme divine :

To glorifie His Mistresse' Face,
Her Haire, Her Lippes, Her Eyes,
In Sorte to sette Her Beantie's Grace
Amidde the starrie Skies.

And for there holdes noe other Hearte
A Love soe depe as mine,
Nor anie Swetenesse hath Deserte
Of Praise soe highe as Thine :

Thy Grace doth aske, that is above
Alle Gemmes in Heaven that are,
A Songe more highe than depeste Love
Mote raise to higheste Starre.

But, Ladye, an Thou aske for Praise,
Yet doe not aske of mee :
My Tongue were alle too poore to raise
Thy Songe of Sovrantie !

If I the Crafte of Orpheus hadde,
And mine His Magicke were,
Then wolde I with Thy Name make gladde
Alle Erthe and Sea and Aire :

And I wolde alle Thy Glorie telle
More mightilie than Hee
When by His Harpinge Hee from Helle
Did drawe Euridice :

Until eche famous Dame of Yore
Thy Fame sholde soare beyonde,
And their Renowne be hearde noe more
In that of Rosamonde.

But Love in verie Soothe is weke
When moste Hee sholde be stronge ;
And to exalte Thee sholde I seke
I sholde but wreke Thee Wronge.

E'en colde I Musicke's Glorie blende
With alle the Welthe of Wordes,
Thy Mede of Praise wolde farre transcende
My vainlie striving Chordes :

Since alle soe faire is growne my Nighte,
 And alle soe fulle my Derthe,
 That Praise were loste amidde Thy Lighte,
 Thou Rose of alle the Erthe!

For on my Nighte soe brightlie come
 Thy Sunshine's orient Rayes,
 I mote not be Aughte else but dumbe
 If Thou shold'st aske for Praise:

And on my Droughte soe softe doth raine
 Thy Swetenesse from above,
 That Aughte to speke were alle in vaine
 Save but the Wordes "I love!"

Yea, Love is Love, nor more nor lesse:
 Nor doe thou deme Him smalle,
 In that Hee onlie can confesse
 Himselfe, nor praise at alle:

For higheste Praise in Him doth dwelle,
 As Glorie Dwelles in Daye:
 And Hee may more by Silence telle
 Than loudeste tongue can saye.

Yea, Love is Love, nor lesse nor more,
 Nor doe Thou holde Him vaine,
 Albeit Hee can but o'er and o'er
 Repete Himselfe againe:

Wherefore in mee noe Dutie is
 But onlie to adore,
 And leue to those who love Thee lesse
 To magnifie Thee more.

Then aske not mee Thy Fame to raise
 Unto Thy native Skie—
 There are ten thousande thus to praise
 Thee better farre than I;

But if the Praise Thou'dst have is Love—
 Then prouddie doe I telle,
 That there is none 'neath Heaven above
 Can praise Thee halfe soe welle!

L'ENVOYE.

Tarrie, my Songe, with mee,
 Prithee, a little space,
 Till I have fashioned Thee
 More worthie of Her Grace!
 Thou wilt not? Thou dost longe
 Soe to beholde Her Face?
 Spede to Her, then, my Songe—
 Wolde I were in Thy Place!

CORNELIUS O'DOWD.

RECONSTRUCTING THE EDIFICE.

THERE was once on a time a grand jury in a western county of Ireland—Mr Justice Keogh can correct me if I be wrong in calling it Clare—who, having occasion to make a presentment for the erection of a new county jail, accompanied their vote with the recommendation “that the materials of the old jail should be used in the construction of the new, but that the old building was to stand, and be used for the confinement of prisoners till the new jail should be ready for their reception.”

Now, though I am far from any intention of comparing the Irish Establishment to a prison, yet I cannot help feeling that the sage resolution I have just quoted seems to be exactly the sort of resolution passed with reference to the new Irish Church.

The old building is to stand till '72, while the new edifice is being constructed—constructed chiefly, however, out of the old materials—a measure first put forward on grounds of economy, and stoutly upheld by the grand jury on the plea that “if sold at a public sale, they would bring next to nothing.”

While, therefore, there has been no small excitement in Ireland, and a very fair display of warmth between the rival parties as to the precise form and symmetry of the new body; while some are for giving great powers to the laity, and others for excluding them altogether; while one set are insisting that on matters of dogma the bishops should be supreme, and the laity only pronounce on questions of finance and exchequer, each would seem to be forgetting that the real difficulty before them was, that they were trying to accomplish the feat recommended by the gentlemen of Clare, which, to put it

mildly, is at least embarrassing! If the problem of the jail was a puzzle, what shall we say to the difficulty of the case where the “old materials” are able to plead their own utility, and insist on being worked up in the new building? This is exactly what has come to pass. It has been decreed by Parliament that the Irish Church was too costly an establishment for its followers—that its wealth and dignity were an offence to those who differed from it; and the Protestants of Ireland have been told that another sect of Christians will say their prayers with far more complacency and self-satisfaction when they know and see that Protestants are as ill off as themselves—a sentiment of charitable meaning that I hope none will question or dispute. Protestants are therefore enjoined to set about the building of a house more in conformity with their reduced fortunes—the very humility consequent on the process being recommended to them as a useful spiritual exercise—and they are admonished against wastefulness, and told not to neglect the old materials.

Every dictate of economy would have suggested that, in the new edifice, all should have been as plain, homely, and useful as possible—little expended on ornament or decoration, and nothing laid out in matters of display. The “old materials,” however, demur to this. They say, “How about us? If we are to be ‘worked up,’ where are we to come in? You are surely not going to employ carved architraves for rafters, or ornamented mullions for joists? And if you mean to utilise us, you must build something that will harmonise with our pretensions to elegance and architectural beauty.”

It was that same artistic elegance that cost us our fate! say the others. Had we been, like the Methodists, contented with a place like a barn, and a preacher on the tramp, there would have been no diatribes over bloated revenues and our leisured-lived dignitaries.

The discussion has lasted for months; it has been warm occasionally to the verge of violence, for the simple reason that each side was animated by strong convictions. A variety of issues have cropped up from time to time; crotchets have been displayed and disposed of; no-surrender men have been confronted with people of elastic consciences, and, with the usual fate of such associations, become fifty times more attached to their opinions than before; but, on the whole, the main difficulty lay where I have stated when I set out, in trying to carry out the directions of the Clare jurymen. They were to use up the old materials, and yet not impair the utility of the building of which they formed a part.

The spirit of ruling Ireland in accordance with Irish ideas, of which the present Ministry are vain as of a great discovery, is here pushed to a degree of flattery that some might almost call coarse; for after all, it was scarcely necessary that, to make legislation appreciable to Irishmen, an Act of Parliament should be a "bull."

Our rulers, however, have thought otherwise. They have said we must not deal with these men as the Tories have done, treating the people of Downshire or Meath as though they were men of Herts or Norfolk. We must study their instincts and their tempers; learn their passions, their prejudices, and their modes of thought. They have a general taste for illegalities: let us see how far we can indulge them without imperilling the safety

of the empire. They dislike the payment of rent, and would rather shoot the landlord than submit to it. This is hard on the landlord, but still it will induce him to make some concessions by which we can compromise the differences between them. They hate the Irish Protestant Establishment, and as few people in England care very much on the matter, let us abolish it; and if the measure be only heralded or escorted by a bull, who shall have the audacity to say we are not "ruling Ireland in conformity with the spirit of Irishmen"?

Some people have been so ungenerous as to say that the statesmen who abolished the State Church in Ireland were secretly minded to make all reconstruction of a Protestant Establishment impossible; and that, in the growth of various forms of dissent, in consequence of the downfall of the Church, they looked to see the Roman Catholic religion assume the dominant station of the Irish Church. Up to the present moment, certainly, whatever may be the apprehensions on this score, there is nothing proven. I am disposed to judge more leniently the great men who rule us. My impression is, that they were solely minded to be very Irish in their Irish policy; and with a boon for the Papists and a bull for the Protestants, what could they do more?

If in their legislation for the land question they only equal the wisdom they have displayed about the Church, who is to accuse the Government of indifference to Ireland? The men who ransack the records of our grand juries to acquire the spirit of our local judicatures, display a zeal in their desire to serve us that must endear them to the heart of every Irishman, or at least of all such as love a bull.

THE PASSION-PLAY IN THE HIGHLANDS OF BAVARIA.

"Cloister and church were the first theatres, priests the first actors, the first dramatic matter was the Passion, the first dramas were the mysteries."—*Gervinus on Shakespeare*, vol. I. 66.

TEN years ago, at Ober-Ammergau, a little village on the borders of Bavaria and the Tyrol, a series of representations was given of the sacred drama of the Passion of our Lord. At one of these performances I had the good fortune to be present, and I now venture to write down from recollection the still vivid impression which this strange spectacle made upon me at the time. I do so now, because in the early summer of this year the play will be given anew, and strangers from all parts of Europe will be there to see. To those who go from this country it may be an object to know beforehand something of the character of the spectacle which awaits them; to those who remain at home it may not be without interest to get some idea of what their friends are going to witness; and to both it may be worth while to hear some tidings of a curiously impressive spectacle, remarkable from being a solitary remnant of the simple realistic phases of religious feeling in the past, and a contrast to the gorgeous exhibitions of the same feeling with which we are familiar in the present.*

In the 'Art-Student of Munich' a short description is given of the performance of 1840. The Baroness Tautpheus, in one of her charming

novels, describes the impressions made upon her heroine by the representation of 1850. And Dean Stanley, in 'Macmillan's Magazine,' has given an interesting art-criticism of the play as it was rendered in 1860. It may seem a little bold to attempt to treat again of what has been so well done before. But twenty years, and even ten years, create great gaps in general literature; and nearly all reading is so ephemeral in these latter days, that the interests of yesterday are forgotten to-morrow; and it is only by laying fresh coatings of paint upon the old signboards—it may be by a less artistic hand—that the impressions of last year leave any trace in this. With the hope, then, of reviving old memories in some minds, and arousing new interests in others, the following pages are written.

Some fifty years ago the representation of such plays as this was common in the wilder districts of Bavaria, in parts of Würtemberg, and in the Tyrol; but now there is one spot only in these countries in which the spectacle can be seen. Fifty years previously—that is, in the middle of last century—there was hardly a village in those distant parts that had not its own distinctive representation, and Passion

* A somewhat similar performance, but of a coarser kind, is mentioned by some writers as taking place at Buenos Ayres; and in the Church of the Sepulchre at Jerusalem, on each Good Friday, some of the more striking incidents in the Passion are roughly represented. A wooden figure of Christ is carried round the church, headed by a long procession of priests. At the different "stations" under the comprehensive roof of the church,—the traditional place of the scourging, the place of the crowning with thorns, the place of crucifixion—i.e., the supposed summit of Calvary—the stone of unction, the sepulchre, &c.—the procession halts, and at these several points discourses in different languages are delivered by the priests to the large assembly of pilgrims who flock to Jerusalem during Holy Week. But except a certain reverence attaching to the localities, there is little of interest in the ceremonial.

Week was the time appointed for the performance. But a crusade was declared against them, in which both the clergy and the laity took part—the clergy, because they were unsuitable to Passion Week; the laity, because they were unworthy of an enlightened age. They had lost much of their primitive character. The burlesque element had mingled with the serious; the sacred and the profane came too closely into contact; the acting was frequently bad; a handle was given to the less reverent to turn things sacred into ridicule; and in 1779 they were publicly condemned by all forms of ecclesiastical denunciations, and the civil authorities in Austria and Bavaria took rigorous measures for their suppression. One exception was made to the general prohibition. In the solitary village of Ober-Ammergau these plays were not interdicted; and the reason of this exception was, that in that village the play was performed in accordance with a vow made two hundred years before, and under the surveillance of the monks of a neighbouring monastery it had always been enacted with becoming piety and decorum.

The village lies high up the valley of the Ammer in the Bavarian highlands, about a long day's journey from Munich, and within two miles of the grand old monastery of Ettal. This monastery was founded by the Emperor Lewis of Bavaria, and for many years prior to the commencement of the present century, when it was secularised, the religious character of this remote district took its colour in great measure from the ecclesiastical influence of the abbey. The village is long and straggling, and is made up of separate houses or *châlets*, each embedded in its own orchard-garden, carefully tended and scrupulously clean. It is situated in a green plain hemmed in on all sides by steep picturesquely-formed mountains, and through the meadow the clear bright stream sparkles onwards in the sunlight,

stealing from the mountains just sufficient valley-land to afford sustenance for the small peasant-population of the village. In numbers the inhabitants may amount to about eight hundred; and, like most of the Alpine peasants in the Bavarian uplands and the more secluded valleys of Switzerland and the south Tyrol, they gain their livelihood by wood carving and engraving.

In 1633 this village was afflicted by a pestilence which followed on the famine and desolation caused by the drain of men absorbed in the wars of Gustavus Adolphus, and the consequent poverty of the people. When the pestilence was at its height, the pious and affrighted villagers vowed a decennial representation of the Passion of our Lord if the plague might be stayed. Their prayers were heard; "and," so the chronicle says, "though many had the plague-spots when the vow was made, yet no more died of it." From that time till the promulgation of the interdict in 1779, the play was regularly performed in accordance with this vow. And it was only by the pleadings of an urgent deputation of Ammergau peasants with Max Joseph of Bavaria, that he was induced to use his influence to save their Mystery from the general condemnation. He was successful in his remonstrances, and the play has been repeated every ten years since that date. A few alterations have been made to relieve the performance of some of its coarser features, but it is substantially the same as it was originally.

The performers number about five hundred; and one and all, from the child of two or three years old who appears among the Israelites in the desert, to the oldest man among the elders in the Sanhedrim, they belong to Ober-Ammergau. The different parts are allotted out to them by a committee of the villagers, who exercise a sort of censorial authority over the players

during the continuance of the play. The personator of Christ considers his part an act of religious worship, and both he and the other principal performers are said to be selected on account of their holy life, and consecrated to their work with prayer. None but those who are esteemed of high moral worth are allowed to take the more important parts. The *roles* of the soldiers and the money-changers are given to those who are less blameless. And, according to Ludwig Clarus, who has published an historical account of the play, the assignment of the parts of Barabas or the executioners to any members of the community is equivalent to a black mark in the village society, and indicates more than equivocal characters. But the importance of the performance is such, so Ludwig tells us, that no one hesitates to accept the part assigned.

The allotment of parts takes place upon the 12th of December, and from then till Whitsunday there are regular rehearsals and preparations under the simple artistic instruction of no one but the parish priest. On Whitsunday the first performance takes place, and from then till the middle of September it is played at stated intervals, but generally every Sunday.*

In 1860 the part of Christ was given to Rupert Schauer. Pflunger, who played that part in 1840 and 1850, with what at first seems a strange contradiction, in 1860 took the part of Pilate.

The theatre was erected on the banks of the little stream, in the outskirts of the village, just below the "Covel," a high column-like rock which rises sheer out of the valley to the height of several thousand feet. This mountain overhangs the little town, and seems to threaten it with possible destruction at any moment—a physical characteristic which is not uncom-

mon in parts of Bavaria and the Tyrol, as any one who has visited Innsbruck will recollect. The building was an immense wooden edifice made of rude planks and benches, and was so laid out as to be capable of containing between eight and nine thousand people, irrespective of the performers. And large though it appeared to be, it has been found inadequate to contain the numerous spectators who come in crowds from every quarter. In such cases the play is repeated on the following day.

The stage, like the stages of the old Greek theatres, was contrived so as to represent a theatre within a theatre. In the centre of the proscenium, at the part farthest from the audience, there was a smaller stage—the "*scena*" of the Greek theatres—on which the scenery was roughly painted. At the sides of the proscenium the palaces of Herod and of Annas, and the streets of Jerusalem, extending to a great distance, were represented; and when the curtain of the inner theatre was raised, showing now the interior of the Temple, now the Supper-chamber, or again the hall of the Sanhedrim, or it might be the garden of Gethsemane, or Mount Calvary, a sort of panoramic representation of Jerusalem, interior and exterior, was exhibited, and the mind, even before the drama commenced, got familiarised with the scenes where it is laid.

The whole aspect of the building was strangely illustrative of the spectacles that must have been presented to the eyes of an Athenian audience in the best days of the Grecian drama. The open-air mid-day performance, which owed everything to the natural scenery of the locality for its optical effects—to the mountains, and the stream, and the green meadow stretching far away in the distance, and, above all, to

* The days appointed for the performances in 1870 are as follows: May 22, 29; June 6, 12, 19, 25; July 3, 10, 17, 24, 31; August 7, 14, 21, 28; September 8, 11, 18, 25, 29.

the lights and shadows of the changing day; the picturesque assembly of eager and impressionable spectators gazing long hours in rapt attention at the working out of a great spectacle that combined so strongly the devotional with the dramatic element; the simple yet artistic acting, with all its rustic properties, its rude decorations, and common untheatrical illusions; the unusual institution of a band or chorus, which, advancing with grave solemnity from opposite sides of the proscenium, ranged itself under the guidance of a Coryphæus, and chanted in unison with him the plan of the scenes as one after another they were to be performed,—all carried back the mind of any one who looked upon the spectacle to scenes almost identically similar, which were enacted in the various theatres of Greece four hundred years before the birth of Him whose life on earth was now being represented.

By daylight on Sunday morning (August 19, 1860), the densely-crowded little village was alive with men and women. From an early hour on Saturday carriages had been arriving from every quarter, and "stellwägen," "einspänner," great wooden carts, and every variety of German conveyance, had been emptying their loads of eager visitors all day before the overcrowded inns.* Pedestrians of every size and shape kept toiling up the steep pass of Ettal, and arriving at every moment travel-stained and weary; many had walked a hundred, some two hundred, miles. You saw long-haired Franciscan and bearded Capuchin monks, with their brown serge dresses girt with belts of rope. There were black-robed priests to the number of eight hundred or thereby. There were Bavarian women, with their

quaint gold and silver head-dresses and their brilliant variegated umbrellas—an indispensable companion. There were Tyrolean peasants—the men in their high-peaked, broad-brimmed hats, richly decorated with gold lace and tassels, their short black breeches, green and scarlet waistcoats, and gigantic embroidered belts; the women in plain black straw hats, tastefully adorned and garlanded with wild flowers. There were Englishmen too, but very few in number, with serious, self-satisfied, complacent faces, contrasting gloomily in their business-like grey cloth suits with all those picturesque costumes. All that motley assembly of men and women you saw toiling up the long steep hill, toiling up as if upon a pilgrimage from a distant land. Long before the sun rose on Sunday morning, all those who had arrived upon the previous day, and many who appeared during the night, were wandering vaguely about the streets with a strange distracted air, as of people possessed with some engrossing idea. From five o'clock till eight, mass was being performed at all five altars in the crowded cathedral; and by eight o'clock every seat in the theatre was occupied.

As the village clock struck eight, and the loud report of a cannon had died away among the mountains, the chorus, to the number of seventeen men and women, dressed in long white and coloured mantles to represent "guardian angels," came filing in upon the stage, and sang to soft low music the prologue of the play. As the first notes rose, the buzz of conversation ceased; and from that moment till twelve o'clock the performance continued without a single interruption; both performers and spectators appearing to be entirely engrossed in what they were acting and beholding.

* The writer of this had to spend the night, sleeping as the best could on some fresh-cut hay laid down for him on a kitchen-floor, with five or six companions whom he knew not.

At twelve there was an hour's interval; the play recommenced at one, and continued with the same unflinching interest until half-past four.

To describe in detail the scenes of this drama, which passed so uninterruptedly before the mind, and were so conspicuously free from all stage contrivances, is no easy task. To convey a true idea of it in writing, or to form an adequate conception of its simple grandeur without personally seeing it, is impossible. It was a sight which no man, whatever may have been his education or his religious opinions, could look upon without some feeling, and without carrying away a deep and lasting impression.

The spectacle was of two kinds. It consisted partly of *tableaux vivants*, which were exhibited on the smaller stage at the back of the proscenium, partly of scenes, which were performed sometimes on one and sometimes on the other stage, and in which the characters spoke and acted as in an ordinary play. Each scene was preceded by one or more tableaux typical of the subject which was to be represented in it. These tableaux were taken from incidents in the Old Testament, and formed part of the choral representation, the duty of the chorus being to explain the typical allusions, and point the moral to be deduced from them. When the prologue was ended, the chorus separated, and rearranged themselves in a semicircle from either side of the inner theatre. The curtain then of the inner theatre drew up, and the stage showed *en tableau* the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise, an angel standing behind them with a flaming sword. Here the Coryphæus took up the chant, and, now singing, now in recitative, explained the scene as typical of the curse only to be expiated by the death of Christ. This opening scene was the key-note of the piece that was to follow. It typified the

object of Christ's life before His resurrection, which was to be represented in the Mystery. The chorus again separated, and the second tableau showed the heavenly angels coming to bring glad tidings upon earth. As they appeared, the chorus reverently kneeled before them, singing a hymn of joy and thanksgiving. That passed away, and the first actual scene succeeded.

The wide streets of the represented city began to fill with men and women all in Oriental costumes. They appeared to be descending the steep green slope of the Mount of Olives, at the outskirts of Jerusalem. In long procession, singing with innumerable voices a triumphal chant, and waving long branches of palm-trees and green boughs in their hands, they filed in. And now, as the leaders of the gay assemblage came winding through the distant streets in the background, advancing towards the front, the music swells in volume and in tone, and seems to come nearer to the audience. The enthusiasm of the great multitude increases — children come in dancing merrily, and strewing flowers upon the path; and men and women are spreading garments on the ground for the feet of some great one to tread. Then in the furthest background appears Christ, meek and lowly amid all the pageant, riding humbly on an ass, and followed in order by the twelve apostles. As he appeared, even above the notes of the triumphant music and the loud hosannas, you seemed to feel a thrill pass through the dense crowd of spectators in the rustic theatre. There appeared to be a momentary cessation of the slightest sound, almost of the breathing of wellnigh eight thousand people. Every sense of every man and woman in that great mass of human beings seemed concentrated on the single figure that had appeared, and for a moment every one seemed struck as if by some mysterious

agency, and rendered powerless. It is impossible to convey any idea of the strange impression produced by the appearance of this man who represented the character of Christ. It was utterly unlike any impression which could be made by any other spectacle or theatrical representation. It seemed to be a strange mixture of reverential awe and curious mysterious interest which probably no one present could have power to analyse. The appearance of the actor, no doubt, had something to do with the effect. And it was altogether favourable to the illusion that it was Christ himself who had suddenly appeared in the midst of the assembly. He had the mild and pensive eye, the pale olive complexion, the finely-moulded features, intellectual forehead, and soft brown hair and beard, which, since the days of Cimabue and Perugino, are stereotyped as characteristic of Jesus Christ. Add to that the long flowing purple vesture, the rich crimson mantle, and the well-known Eastern sandals, represented in the pictures of the old masters, and it seemed almost as if one of these old pictures had been endowed with life; or perhaps as if the glass of time had moved backward eighteen hundred years, and we were living and acting in that the greatest drama that this world has ever known.

The twelve, each in their characteristic costumes, followed him.

And so completely was the individuality of each brought out, that even when they thus appeared for the first time, it would have been no difficult matter to single out each man among them as they passed. Behind them followed a multitude of Jews, both men and women; and in that multitude you could mark a few here and there who showed signs of disapproval, and who soon were to appear as Christ's enemies and accusers.

It would be endless to attempt to describe each of the tableaux and scenes, as they followed one after another without intermission, except the few minutes occupied during each by the chorus in explaining the typical allusions, and indicating the general bearing of the piece. It is better to mention in order the tableaux and their corresponding scenes, and to particularise those only which were more especially interesting, and which stamped their impression more clearly on the mind.

The performance was divided into two parts. The first began, as we have seen, with the triumphal entrance into Jerusalem, and ended with the betrayal in the garden of Gethsemane. The second opened with the bringing of Christ before Annas, and closed with the resurrection.

In the first part, the tableaux and the scenes which they typified were as follows:—

TABLEAUX.

1. Adam and Eve expelled from Paradise.
2. Heavenly angels bring glad tidings upon earth.
1. Jacob's sons conspire against Joseph.
1. Tobias takes leave of his parents.
2. The bride bewails the loss of the bridegroom.

SCENES.

- I.
1. Entrance into Jerusalem.
2. Turning the money-changers out of the Temple.
3. Departure from Bethany.
- II.
1. High priests and elders take counsel in the Sanhedrim to bring Jesus into their power.
- III.
1. The journey to Bethany.
2. The supper at Bethany.
3. Jesus takes leave of his mother and his friends at Bethany.

TABLEAUX.

SCENES.

1. Vashti spurned by Ahasuerus.

1. The manna given to the children of Israel in the desert.

1. Joseph sold by his brethren to the Midianites.

1. Adam toiling in the field after his expulsion from the garden of Eden.

2. Joab at the rock kills Amasa on pretence of kissing him.

3. Samson overpowered by the Philistines.

1. The last journey to Jerusalem ; two of the disciples sent forward to prepare the Supper.

2. Judas tempted by the Jews to betray Jesus.

1. The Last Supper.

1. Judas comes to the Sanhedrim, and agrees to sell Jesus to the Pharisees.

1. The agony in the garden.

2. Judas betrays Jesus with a kiss.

3. Jesus, deserted by his disciples, is led away by his betrayers.

In this part of the drama, the entrance into Jerusalem and the Last Supper were the most effective scenes. The agony in the garden, perhaps because more might be expected from it, had less perceptible effect upon the mind. Perhaps, too, the minute realisation of every particular of the Gospel narrative—the three distinct times at which Jesus returned and found his disciples asleep—the incongruity of the stealthy night attack upon him under cover of dark lanterns, while the sky overhead was blue and clear, and the mid-day sun was streaming down upon the scene—the kiss given by Judas, and the onslaught made by Peter upon Malchus when he cut off his ear, all which is adhered to rigidly,—these and other realistic details may have blunted susceptibilities which would have been keenly excited by a more imaginative rendering, and may have marred the general effectiveness of the scene. But yet, as you looked on that solitary figure bowed down in agony, and noted the acute expression of pain upon his face, and the great drops of sweat like blood upon his brow, carrying out so literally the curse pronounced on Adam, you could not remain an unmoved spectator. You felt then, perhaps for the first

time, the loneliness, the hopelessness, the depth of human misery, and with all that the more than human resignation of which we read so often with disproportionate sympathy in the descriptions of that night of agony.

Second only to the delineation of the crucifixion in impressiveness, and more touching than the triumphal entry, from the home feeling and simplicity in the action, ranks unquestionably the representation of the Last Supper. In the general arrangements and external appearance this scene was not unlike what may be witnessed on a sacrament Sunday in many a country church in the Highlands of Scotland. The ceremony, as performed here, recalled the Presbyterian rather than the Episcopalian or Roman Catholic form of administering the Communion. In the Presbyterian Church alone, the true idea of the Holy Supper, comparatively free from all mysticism or symbolical significance, is preserved in its primitive simplicity. The Episcopalian, no less than the Roman Catholic Churches, have departed far from the traditional ritual. In both of these a tincture of unreality has appeared in the lapse of ages. And this unreality, while it cannot be considered to

add to the solemnity of the Holy Sacrament, is greatly at variance with the type presented by the Evangelists. The Scotch Kirk, on the other hand, from its scrupulous abhorrence of anything unnatural, reproduces the original celebration in much the same character as it possessed when first performed in the upper chamber in Jerusalem. In the ceremony at Ammergau, the chamber, the long narrow table, and the grouping of the twelve around it, were all apparently copied from Leonardo da Vinci's well-known masterpiece. It seemed almost as if that great picture had been revived and transformed into living and moving existence, and transported from the cloister in Milan to the wild highlands of Bavaria. Or perhaps the scene, as it was presented here in its studied simplicity, went further even than Leonardo's conception. Your ideas were unconsciously carried beyond the imaginings of the painter, or the representation of the village actors; and you almost felt that you were present with the disciples as the actual fact was originally enacted by Jesus Christ and them. The cup was blessed and handed round among the twelve, and then Jesus rose and broke the bread, and placed a morsel of it in the mouth of each; and as they received it, all but Judas, with lowered eyes and clasped hands, they seemed as if they had actually received of the bread of life from the hands of the Son of God. And after he had given of the bread, he rose again and blessed the cup, and gave it with his own hands to each, and they received it prayerfully. It is seldom that a more impressive Communion service—impressive from its simplicity—has been witnessed since the first great inauguration.

The effect upon the audience appeared to be greater during this scene than during any other throughout the whole performance. Deep as was the emotion exhibited

at Christ's first entrance, and strangely acute as was the thrill that passed through every heart as the cross was raised at the crucifixion, the feeling at this moment, though somewhat different, seemed even more intense and more all-pervading. It was a holy, reverent, awe-struck feeling, such as is sometimes experienced in a great cathedral when every face is devoutly turned to the earth, and the solemnising bell chimes through the aisles, and the silver trumpets peal out to tell that the host is being raised, and that God is in the midst of His worshippers. It seemed here as if the great multitude of onlookers at this representation of the Supper really believed implicitly in the performance which they saw going on before them. They appeared to feel that they were actually in the presence of the Son of God. At the crucifixion the more purely spiritual element was in abeyance, and the feeling indicated by the audience was more painful and sympathetic, as if it was evoked by a fellow-man in agony. Here there was a mixture of feeling. It was partly solemn and awe-struck, as if called out by the contemplation of something supernatural, and partly homelike and kindly and familiar, as if elicited by the intense natural humanity exhibited in this representation of the Last Supper. In looking on it you seemed to realise at once the divine and human nature of the Son of Man.

After the supper was ended, Jesus rose and laid aside his mantle and his girdle (reminding one, as he appeared in his vesture, of the well-known modern picture representing his walking on the sea), and, as is described by St John, proceeded to wash the disciples' feet. This scene, like some of those in the second part, was difficult to exhibit. The line which separates the sublime from the ridiculous in such scenes as these presented, must necessarily be a very narrow one. When the

feelings are excited to the highest pitch, and the nervous system kept upon the strain, the smallest divergence from beyond this line, even the remotest trace of commonplace, must at once produce reaction. Had even the faintest shadow of burlesque—if such a word may without impropriety be used—been observable in any portion of the performance of the character of Christ, this scene must have brought it out. And, more than this, had the acting of the part been studied or professional acting, and not, as it was, a personification drawn out by deep religious sentiment from the soul, it must have protruded itself unpleasantly in this scene, and the taste of the more cultivated in the audience would have been shocked. But as the character was represented by Rupert Schauer with perfect truthfulness and simplicity, with an innate dignity and total forgetfulness of self, you almost felt as if it was the man Jesus himself who was performing this menial office, and not the roughly-cultured peasant of Bavaria.

There were in all eleven tableaux in this first part of the drama, and of these three stood out as of special interest. Two of them passed quickly, one after the other; and whether from the contrast they presented to each other, or from the simple beauty and apparent truthfulness of the typical illustration which they were intended to convey, they were both strikingly effective.

The first corresponded to the scene which represented Judas bargaining with the Pharisees in the Sanhedrim for the betrayal of Jesus. It represented Joseph's brethren bartering with the Midianites for the sale of their brother. In this tableau great pains had been taken to throw a light and joyous character over the scenery, and over the figure of Joseph. The Oriental aspect of the country, the bright

variegated dress of the boy, who, true to the traditionary history, wore his "coat of many colours," and the innocent childlike appearance of his figure and bearing, contrasting with the dark treacherous expression of the faces of his brethren, formed together a studied and artistic picture.

The second of these three tableaux was a striking contrast to the first. It corresponded to the agony in the garden, and represented a scene of awful desolation, in which Adam, after his expulsion from the garden of Eden, clothed in sheep-skins, care-worn and sad, was represented toiling wearily, while the sweat was pouring from his brow; and Eve sat mournfully behind, with her two children, also clothed in sheep-skins, who were playing with a lamb, and afterwards, with perhaps overstrained typical application, fighting for an apple.

The third of these tableaux was of a very different caste. It was more pleasing and graceful than the others, though perhaps less striking. It came on before the tragic scenes which afterwards engrossed the attention, manifestly of definite purpose to prepare the minds of the spectators. It corresponds to the departure from Bethany, when Jesus takes leave of the Virgin Mother and his friends before his final entrance into Jerusalem; and it may be taken as descriptive of the hymn—

"Wo ist er hin? wo ist er hin?
Der schöne aller schönen"—

a hymn founded apparently on some of the more beautiful verses in the Song of Solomon. It was sung on this occasion to soft melodious music.

The second part of the performance commenced at one o'clock, and lasted continuously until half-past four. The scenes and their corresponding tableaux were as follows:—

TABLEAUX.

1. The prophet Micah prophesies truly before Ahab.

1. Stoning of Naboth.

2. Job insulted by his friends and his wife.

1. The murder of Abel.

1. Daniel before Darius.

1. David's messengers before Hanun.

1. Joseph's brethren show Jacob the coat of many colours stained with blood.

2. Abraham finds a ram caught in a thicket when about to sacrifice Isaac.

1. Joseph honoured by the Egyptians.

2. The scapegoat.

1. Isaac goes up Mount Moriah laden with wood for sacrifice.

2. Moses shows the people in the wilderness the brazen serpent.

(No type.)

1. Jonah in the whale's belly.

2. Destruction of the Egyptians in the Red Sea.

SCENES.

I.

1. Jesus brought before Anna.

II.

1. Jesus brought before Caiaphas.

2. Denial of Peter.

3. Peter's repentance.

III.

1. Repentance of Judas.

2. Judas in the Sanhedrim.

3. Judas hangs himself.

IV.

1. Jesus before Pilate.

V.

1. Jesus before Herod.

VI.

1. Pilate orders Jesus to be scourged.

2. Jesus buffeted, scourged, and crowned with thorns.

VII.

1. Jesus shown to the people with Barabbas.

2. Pilate washes his hands, and orders Jesus to death.

VIII.

1. Jesus, laden with the cross, goes up to Golgotha, and meets His mother with the apostle John.

2. Simon of Cyrene compelled to bear the cross.

3. Women of Jerusalem bewailing the Lord.

IX.

1. The crucifixion.

X.

1. The resurrection.

2. Appearance before Mary Magdalene.

XI.

1. Jesus surrounded by the saints in glory.

HALLELUJAH.

The tableaux in this part of the play were less effective than those of the earlier part, although there was no perceptible diminution in the care devoted both to the selection and to the representation of the types. It may be that the attention was wearied with the lengthened strain upon it, and the mind, fixed as it was more exclusively

on the central figure in the drama, could hardly dwell upon the minor details. The impression, therefore, produced by these tableaux is less distinct and vivid than that produced by those of the earlier part.

In a scenic point of view, the raising of the brazen serpent in the wilderness was the most remarkable. But it was remarkable more

from the appearance presented by the dense mass of men, women, and children, crowded upon the inner stage at one time, and from the variety of costume which they displayed, than from any peculiar sentiment embodied in the representation which could act upon the imagination.

The tableau of the scapegoat, also, was finely conceived, and had something grand about it as represented. And this grandeur was heightened by the part played by the chorus which immediately followed it. For as they sang the explanation, dwelling upon the verification of the type in the person of Him who bore the sins of the world, and lamenting over Jerusalem as the spot on which the sacrifice was to be offered, you heard at intervals the savage shouting of the populace ringing through the streets of Jerusalem—now crying for Barabbas to be saved, now cursing Pilate and demanding the blood of Christ; and at last the loud shouts of "Crucify him! crucify him! His blood be on us and on our children" ("Ans Kreuz mit ihm! ans Kreuz mit ihm! Sein blut komme über uns und unsere Kinder"), were raised, and echoed and re-echoed from one side of the city to the other. These wild voices, mingling dramatically with the choral chants, were the same which but a short time before had been joining in the loud hosannas on the triumphal entry. The contrast was of course designed, and was intended partly to exhibit the fickleness and perversity of the Jewish people—a trait of character still commonly exhibited by Oriental and semi-Oriental nations—and partly to prepare the minds of the spectators for the scenes which were to follow.

From this time till the close, the tragedy solemnly and gradually went deepening on. And even though all were in a manner prepared for the climax, yet when it came there was something about it

so preternaturally real and painful, that no preparation was altogether adequate. You saw Jesus, his hands bound behind his back, dragged now to Annas, now to Caiaphas, then to the Roman governor, and from him to Herod. You saw the soldiers buffet him, it appeared brutally, from one to another. They scourged him, and you heard the stripes falling upon his back. They set him on a rude prison stool, and they crowned him with the crown of thorns, and put a purple robe upon him, and a reed in his hand, and they hailed him in derision as their king. It was a matter of curious interest to note the effect that this exhibition seemed to have upon the audience. To them it appeared wonderful that the soldiers could have been brought to act such parts; and the whole race of men seemed hateful when contrasted with the chief character, who throughout all the persecution bore his sufferings in long-enduring silence, and with no trace of anger. And these feelings were intensified as the play wore on. But it was not until Christ appeared, worn out with fatigue and pain, toiling up the slope of Calvary, and bearing laboriously the heavy wooden cross on which he was to suffer—until the nails were driven in, and the man on whom the sympathy of every one had been concentrated through the various scenes of glory and humiliation, was raised upon the cross—that the full reality and horror of the tragic history came before the mind. Then, in that great assembly of near eight thousand people, it appeared as if there was not a single eye which was not fixed with steadfast attention upon the man crucified. The minds of all seemed strangely wrapped up in the contemplation of the spectacle, and a thrill of pity seemed to pass through their hearts. No ordinary theatrical effects could excite anything approaching to the sensation produced by this scene. The religious feelings were upper-

most, and man's inmost sympathies were called out by the mysterious significance of the whole performance. You heard the nails driven through his hands into the hard wood, and could almost feel the piercing. You saw the form of the man, whose life you had been watching, stretched upon the cross, his head crowned with the sharp thorns, the wounds still bleeding; but even yet his countenance bore that unutterable expression of majesty and meekness which has ever been associated with all our traditional conceptions of Jesus Christ. With strange emotions you gazed upon the executioners as upon wild beasts when they tore his mantle into shreds, and cast lots for his vesture; and the Jewish race appeared hateful in your eyes, as you watched them gathering round the cross, looking on the man they had crucified, and railing at him, and taunting him with his powerlessness and his pain. Then for the first time you seemed to understand the significance of those ungovernable explosions that in the history of the middle ages one reads of, when sudden outbursts of hatred against the Hebrew race have taken place, and have been followed by cruelties and barbarities unexampled in history. Just such a feeling seemed excited in this Ammergau audience by this representation.

For once you could hardly believe that it was the man who had been for the last thirty years living actor amongst them, until he opened his eyes, and his familiar features, that of a thief, no longer doubtless, but of an instant actor, produced the same effect. The people, men and women, became as if they had ceased to breathe, and ran cold, and the drops of perspiration well out upon their foreheads, as a nightmare. The well-known

words "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabac-thani?" were pronounced in a deep voice by him from the cross, and a moment later, as the sounds "Es ist vollbracht!" ("It is finished!") issued from his lips, and his head dropped upon his breast, it seemed as if the multitude could hardly move or breathe. Throughout the large assemblage at this moment there was no movement perceptible—nothing but a dead solemnity, and cessation of all action and all life.

Unimpressible as the Bavarian highlanders are, and little given to demonstration, and accustomed as the Tyrolese have ever been to see coarse material representations of our Lord in every form and at every turning of the remotest glens among their mountains, yet this living representation elicited from each and all of them some exhibition that could not be controlled. Not that there was any individual expression more conspicuously discernible than another, but a sort of contagious emotion seemed to pass through the whole building, and to affect all who were therein—that sort of emotion which quivers through the body like an electric shock, and which indicates more truly than any mere outward manifestation the feelings that are at work within.

The remainder of the spectacle, though conducted with the same unremitting care and studied attention to minute detail, was less effective. The feelings, which had been so tensely strung and kept upon the strain, seemed to relax and die away as Christ's head fell upon his breast. The attention was wearied and difficult to control, and the interest almost imperceptibly began to flag. You saw the soldiers break the bones of the two thieves with great wooden bludgeons, and carry their dead bodies away. They pierced Christ's side with a spear, and blood gushed out mingled with water. The crowd about the cross dispersed quietly

and naturally, as if after an ordinary execution; and Joseph of Arimathea and the few faithful friends came and gently, carefully removed the body from the cross, grouped exactly as in the greatest of all the works of Rubens—the “Descent” in the Nôtre Dame at Antwerp. You saw them lay him in a sepulchre, and the watch was set, and in the morning the stone rolled back and the arisen Lord appeared. Lastly, you saw him as he appeared before Mary Magdalene, and as he stood, crowned with glory, surrounded by the saints and angels, and by the chorus, who, having discarded the black robes of mourning which they wore during the crucifixion, appeared again in white, and concluded the whole spectacle by singing a hymn of praise grander and more triumphal than that with which they opened it.

These latter scenes made, as compared with the others, but little impression on the mind. The reason may have been, that all idea of human sympathy had gone, and the scenes in themselves were not of sufficient grandeur to excite any higher feeling. And the mind, worked up as it had been to a high pitch, was weary, and could not be affected by anything less grand than had already been presented to it. Perhaps it may have been that the performance attempted what was beyond the power of the performers. So long as the actions were those of the man Jesus—so long as the triumphs and sufferings represented were human triumphs and human sufferings—so long, in short, as Christ's life on earth was exhibited,—the various scenes could be portrayed by men, and they could appeal to human sympathies and feelings. But when the line of demarcation was crossed, and men attempted to demonstrate the spiritual and the supernatural, their attempts were meagre and the results inadequate. The recollection, therefore, of the latter part of the spectacle is transitory and evanescent,

and when compared with the earlier and more thrilling portions of the performance, the conclusion must be considered ineffective.

Turning for a moment from the drama itself to the performers, there are two whose delineation of character was specially worthy of notice, and who, next to the personification of Christ, were the most interesting to study. These two acted the parts of Judas and Pilate, and the performance was interesting, partly from being well conceived, and on the whole creditably acted, and partly from being suggestive of new conceptions of both characters.

Judas, who, in harmony with tradition, wore a dress of dark-yellow colour to denote the passion of envy, was not the treacherous, avaricious Jew, such as in this country he is generally conceived. He was a strong, restless, dissatisfied, and ambitious man. When he first appeared, except a sort of nervous clutching at the money-bag which he carried, there was nothing particularly noticeable about his appearance. But from the time that Mary anoints Jesus' feet with the precious ointment there is a change in his whole character. He murmurs then at the expenditure; and the waste of money, which might have been given to the poor, and was thus squandered, seems to weigh upon him like a weight of lead. His conduct is completely changed. He becomes morose and dissatisfied, and seems to be the victim of a monomania. Some words pass between him and Jesus, and his restlessness and dissatisfaction at his lot increase and become unbearable. In the return across the Mount of Olives from Bethany to Jerusalem, he walks apart from the other disciples, brooding over the money that is gone, troubled and uncertain. At that moment he is met by some of the scribes and the money-changers, and the work of his corruption is begun. He follows them to the Sanhedrim, and there

half consents to betray his Master, and receives the silver pieces. At the Last Supper, while the others are wrapped in prayer after partaking of the bread, he sits behind, gloomy and dispirited; and at last, before the end of the meal, he gets up and hurries from the chamber. He accomplishes his task in the garden. But when he sees his Master led from one judge to another, and realises the nature of the crime which he has committed, he seems to awake from his monomania to the full consciousness of what he has done. Then his true and better nature comes in full force to the surface. He hurries in a transport of despair to the Sanhedrim, and addresses the high priest and the elders seated there in wild and raving words, and throws down before them the accursed money. Then, in a paroxysm of remorse and agony, he rushes away, wildly roaming at random through the deserted streets of Jerusalem the picture of despair. Then he appears upon the inner stage, and climbs a tree; and as he dropped, hanging from one of the branches, the curtain fell, and he disappeared for ever from the scene.

The character of Pilate was on this occasion performed by Pflunger, who in the representations of 1840 and 1850 had sustained the part of Christ. He chose the part of Pilate in the performance of 1860 because the tremendous physical exertion necessary for the part of Christ was too exhausting, and the fatigue too excessive, for a man well advanced in years.

The conception of this character, like that of Judas, was the least painful that could be produced. He was not represented as a brutal and tyrannical Roman governor, as the illiterate are apt to conceive him; nor was he a weak man like Festus, who, fearing Cæsar, wished to do the Jews a favour. He was, as an intellectual gentleman of the Court of Augustus and his imme-

diate successors, deeply impressed with the dignity of law and the majesty of Rome, and somewhat tinged with the Epicurean philosophy then in vogue among the more educated of the Roman nobility. The vacillation of his character was not made prominent. His actions seemed to be dictated by a feeling of easy acquiescence in what seemed inevitable, rather than by any more cogent motive. He appeared to think but little of the weight of responsibility which he was incurring. The only interest he showed in the man before him was of a half-philosophical kind, which manifested itself in a desire to probe the new doctrines which he heard promulgated, and which induced him, not in jest or irony, but in a spirit of intellectual curiosity, to ask the question, "What is truth?" The question once asked, his curiosity seemed sated. No answer was given, and the proceedings went on as narrated in the Bible narrative. The conception of the character was thus a good one, and to some extent original; and it was sustained to the end as well as it was conceived. The natural dignity and grandeur of the Roman procurator sat well upon the man who played his character.

To a critical eye two of the scenes in the latter part of the performance appeared below the others in dramatic conception and action. These were the denial by Peter and the meeting of the Virgin with Jesus as he bore his cross up Mount Calvary. The first was neither so natural nor so real as most of the other scenes. Then, and perhaps then only, you felt that you were looking on a performance and not on a reality. You recognised the fact that men were acting parts, not living them. And when the imitation of the cock-crow—not a very good imitation—was heard, you knew too truly that you were looking on a dramatic representation which was

not quite equal. Defective as this scene was, and bordering almost upon the burlesque from the inferiority in the acting, it was impossible to detect a symptom of derision on a single face.

The other scene, which with good dramatic action might have been deeply touching, passed away with no effect. The part of the Virgin was no doubt difficult to play, still a great opportunity was given for an exhibition of feeling and emotion without transgressing the straitest limits of religious decorum. But this character was not effectively represented. Indeed, owing perhaps to the vast expanse of the open-air theatre, which a woman's voice could hardly fill, none of the female parts were well performed. In conception, in action, and in voice, they all fell much below the representations of the male performers, and on the whole may be said to have failed to produce an adequate delineation of the sacred characters.

It is not proposed here to enter upon the question of the propriety or desirability of such performances as this of Ober-Ammergau. It cannot be denied that when men and women attempt to reproduce the most impressive drama that has ever been enacted, and which exercises its own mysterious influence upon the imagination of all, they are treading upon difficult and delicate ground. The faintest trace of impropriety or levity, or want of decorum even in the minutest matters of detail in the piece, would at once be felt, and would shock the taste as being something revolting and sacrilegious. But it is this very difficulty and delicacy which makes the performance so instructive and so genuinely grand when performed as it was by those peasant artists in that highland valley.

And those who would discuss such a question must bear well in mind that the men who perform the characters, and those who look

upon them, are not Englishmen and Englishwomen, imbued with Protestant feelings, growing up in Protestant traditions, and with a Protestant horror of any actual representation of any of the sacred characters. Both actors and spectators have been accustomed from childhood to see in their churches, in their homes, and on every way-side, statues and pictures and representations of all the most suggestive incidents in the life of Christ. The deep religious reverence for such things, innate in the hearts of these mountaineers, is something unknown in Protestant and less remote Catholic countries. No one can form any conception of the sacred feelings with which the forms of our Lord and of the Virgin, however coarsely delineated, are regarded in those mountain districts, until he has wandered through the secluded valleys and more distant glens of the Tyrol or the Bavarian highlands. There at every turning he meets some little chapel to the Virgin, some wooden figure of Christ crucified, a simple cross to show the way or mark the summit of a mountain-pass, or some pictured tablet to commemorate a fatal accident, and to beg the passer-by to offer up a prayer for the soul of some sufferer in purgatory. He cannot enter the poorest room in the most miserable *chalet* in the mountains without seeing some rude painting of the Virgin and the Son decorated with wild flowers and with beads, and underneath a little crystal glass for holy water.

Among such things the peasants of these uplands have been born and reared, until they are part and parcel of their daily life. And the absence of these symbols would strike the senses of such men with something the same force that their presence too often strikes upon the mind of an educated Protestant until he becomes familiar with them.

Such considerations as these must be borne in mind and pondered

carefully by those who question the propriety of such spectacles before they condemn them utterly.

The impression left on the mind by the whole performance was of course mainly of an objective character. It was the spectacle which really was effective. But looked at subjectively, there was also a good deal to be gathered from it. The story of the last days of Christ's life appeared as a vivid whole before the mind. You could take it all in, and see how the scenes fitted into each other and into the main narrative, and formed one connected history; whereas the ideas to be gathered from the daily reading of the story, chapter by chapter, are apt to be fragmentary.

And there was much in the performance that was interesting on historical as well as on religious grounds. Unconsciously the mind was led back to think of the varied scenes in Jewish history, and of the daily and hourly life of that strange race at this the most momentous period of its existence. To classic times, also, the ideas were transported—to the times of Pericles no less than to the times of Augustus. The theatre was Greek, and the construction of the drama was modelled on the Greek; but the action was Roman. The colouring of the whole of the second part was curiously suggestive of the times of the Cæsars. Pilate, with something

of the dignity of the "Consul Romanus" in his bearings and surroundings, the Roman soldiers round the cross, the crucifixion itself, all told of the pomp of Imperial Rome; and the littleness of the motives and impulses of human life—the human life even of the greatest nations—was presented before the eyes as in a picture.

Lastly, the spectacle was interesting as a relic of the old days of the middle ages, when such performances were as common as the theatrical representations of the present day. Yet the interval of ten years between each series of performances, and the remoteness of the place where they take place, a little off the track of ordinary travellers, are happy safeguards to preserve to the spectacle its earnestness and simplicity. If it became a common or an annual occurrence, people would get accustomed to it, and would go to look upon it as they would upon any other spectacle at any other theatre. The spirit in which alone it should be seen would disappear. And both actors and spectators, instead of performing and beholding it as they do now in a religious and a prayerful state of mind, would come to look upon it—the first, as an arena in which to display artistic talent; the second, as a spectacle to be criticised by manifestations of applause or disapproval.

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CONTENTS.

EARL'S DENE—PART VI.,	397
THE PRINCESSE DES URSINS,	415
JOHN.—PART VI.,	434
CHATTERTON,	453
BLUE LAWS,	477
ON THE GOVERNMENT SCHEME OF ARMY REFORM,	489
CORNELIUS O'DOWD—	499
THE TIPPERARY ANSWER.	
ON SOME RASH INVESTMENTS.	
DULL AS DITCHWATER.	
A PROTESTANT RELIEF BILL.	
THE STATE, THE POOR, AND THE COUNTRY,	509
COUNT CHARLES DE MONTALEMBERT,	522

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EARL'S DENE.—PART VI.

BOOK II.—MARIE.

CHAPTER I.

A MAN's real birthday is not the day on which he first opens his eyes to the light of the sun. It is that on which the sunshine first pierces a little farther than his outward eyes.

At all events I like to say so ; seeing that the latter, in my own case, is the only birthday that I am able to keep. For anything that I know to the contrary, I may be as old as the Great Pyramid, and have passed the first few thousand years of my life in a slumber from which I one day suddenly woke up to see—some clothes hung out to dry in a back garden.

Not a very striking introduction to the waking world. But what would you ? Everybody must see something first ; and it is not given to everybody to find their self-consciousness for the first time in a storm or in a battle. Of course, if I had my own way I would give my memory a more poetical origin ; but, as I have not my own way in the matter—indeed I have, in

VOL. CVII.—NO. DCLIV.

the course of my life, had it very seldom, except in my very earliest years, when I had it rather too much—I must be satisfied with facts, however unpoetical they may be. Besides, I might have done worse. These same clothes—petticoats and such things—were not, I remember, without their merit as a spectacle to untried eyes, whether in point of colour, or of the form bestowed upon them by the wind, as it shook them and puffed them out into the semblance of the waveline of an angry sea : and I distinctly remember the rhythm of their flapping—an unmusical sound which, however, has been suggested to me a hundred times since by music in many cases as devoid of either body or soul as the clothes themselves, but which has often, for that very reason, affected me, not by any inherent suggestive power of its own, but by calling to mind a thousand other things.

Many a soulless sound has since—heaven knows why—by carrying my memory backwards over what

2 E

is by this time a very long period of years, summoned up before me, in no ghost-like fashion, the undulations of familiar hills, the springiness of their turf, the whiteness of their winters, the sunshine of their summers—in a word, that strange, mysterious, magical odour that is at once suggested by the words, "my own country." I wonder whether it is given to those who, as I consider it, have the misfortune to be born in great cities, to really understand this feeling—whether the Parisian or the Londoner finds in the multitude and variety of his stench anything similar in effect? For my part I believe they do; and that, had I also been city born, the smell of many chimneys, for example, might bring as dear and as sadly pleasant associations to my heart as the special perfume of my own woods and hills. For, as the voice is to the man or woman, so is this subtle aroma of the past to places; and the voice of his mother sounds harshly to no man.

At least I suppose not; for in this matter I must confess myself personally ignorant. Even as in point of age I might, for aught I know, be the contemporary of the Pyramids, so, in point of parentage, I might be of no woman born.

Who my father was, however, I do know—at least I have been told. He was no other than the Marquis de Créville, who had been feudal lord of the place where, on the principle I have laid down, I consider myself to have been born; and I have also been told that I was, or rather should have been, in the bad old times, heir to his title and lands. As things actually were, however, I found myself heir to nothing but to his name and to his principles, which, I am proud to say, seem to have been those of no marquis of the old *régime*, but of a citizen of France: of one who is the willing subject of no royal accident. Such also am I, Félix Créville, Frenchman and

musician: such, in spite of much sorrow—ay, and worse than sorrow because of it—I have always been proud to be; and such I am content to remain, until a few more years lead me at last, as I hope they will, to join that mother in heaven whom on earth I have so ignorantly loved.

Amen. But to return to the clothes'-line period, now so long ago, and yet still so near.

Childish recollections are strange things—strange in their very monotony; for, in spite of circumstantial differences, those of most men are pitched pretty nearly in the same key. The colour that the universe assumes to the eyes of one young child is always much the same as that which it assumes to another, however much the form may vary. Whenever I have, in the course of conversation upon this subject, happened to compare notes with people of any sort or kind or country, high or low, rich or poor, I have always found that there is as much essential community of experience in this respect as in dreams, even although almost every one, as in the case of dreams, tries to make out his own to have been something singular and abnormal. At any rate, I can safely say, for my own part, that I have never even found in books any account of childish experiences—of course I do not mean in point of outward detail—with which I have not been able to sympathise personally; and I know that in this I am very far from standing alone. Indeed I firmly believe that this would prove to be universally the case were it not that so many people forget the childhood of their minds and of their souls altogether. To remember one's past self as one really was, and as one is no longer, requires a faculty that is far from being universal; for it requires the faculty which, when joined with a power of expression, makes the poet. Without going so far as to claim for myself that title, I do hope that I may

claim to call myself something of an artist in my own line, which comes to much the same thing; and, if I am at all an artist, I feel that it is because I am still the same Félix who was once, according to my system of autobiographical chronology, five minutes old.

Thus my own country, my old home, and the effect that they produced upon me by developing me into what I am, are still a part of my present self. Still part of me are those green valleys and wooded hills, alternately so beautiful and so desolate: still part of me, if not myself altogether, are their sounds—their various music of brooks, of rivers, and of torrents; of warm breezes and cold winds; of their birds, of their cattle, and all the notes and harmonies of the symphony of pastoral nature. Still part of me, also, are their discords: and, of these, above all the howl of the wolves in winter, which always used to fill me with a peculiar and nameless terror, the source of which seemed to belong to some previous state of existence. But this is not all. There were the people also, few enough and kind enough for me to know them all both by and with my heart. It needs not the slightest effort of memory for me to recall the forms and voices of "*Grand'mère*," as I used to call the stern but bravely patient peasant whom the country round knew as Aunt Cathon; of my foster-mother; of the good Curé, who was to me more than a father; of the lame wood-carver, who almost made a sculptor of me; of my playmates at Eaux-Grandes and Les Vacheries; of our dogs, both christened Loup, whom I fear I was ungrateful enough to my human friends to love as well as I loved any one; and, above all—above man, woman, or dog—that laziest, cleverest of village ne'er-do-wells, whose violin introduced me to a music that is almost more to me than that of nature herself. I have thought, sometimes, of composing a *fantasia* on the subject of that fel-

low and his tunes, only no one could be expected to appreciate it but myself, and for me it would be too sad a task now. If, however, I ever do any such thing, I shall call it "*Pré-aux-Fleurs*," and tell no one why.

I remember, also, that I was looked upon in the village as a sort of superior being, if only for my father's sake. No one ever once scolded me, that I can remember, under any circumstances: and I am sure that if I was ever guilty of the weakness of crying for the moon, as I have no doubt I was, it was not the fault of my friends that it did not become mine. Every one, I fear, spoiled me, and "*Grand'mère*" most of all; and I believe that to this very day I might have gone on living upon the charity of the place, thinking it quite right and quite in the natural order of things, had it not been for the Curé and the fiddler. The former taught me to read and write, to decline *Musa*, to be a good Catholic, and to remember that, peasant as I had become, I was a French gentleman after all—a fact that, in spite of my republicanism, I was, and am not, unwilling to remember. The latter, who was called Jean-Baptist, taught me to play the Marseillaise—which I infinitely preferred to *Musa*—to sing a song or two, and to keep time to one or two lively dances. Nearly half my time I spent with the one teacher, and nearly half with the other; and though I know whose company I then most preferred, it would be difficult for me to say upon which of the two I look back with most affection now.

Nevertheless, in spite of the education that in one way and another I managed to pick up, it naturally required some external circumstance of a very decided nature to prevent my settling down in some way or other as a peasant of Saint Félix-des-Rochers—for so was the parish named. It is true that the conscription might have

turned me into a soldier of the empire. But otherwise I should very likely have married one of my playmates—I think I know which it would have been—and settled down into the proprietorship of a *châlet*; while my violin would have succeeded that of Jean-Baptiste as the enlivener of weddings and festivals. I believe, too, that in my ignorance of all external life I should have been happy. But I do not, cannot, regret that such was not to be my lot: for who would give up his experience even of sorrow?

One day—for I did not see my few playmates very often—I was wandering about alone in the neighbourhood of Pré-aux-Fleurs—or rather I should have been wandering about alone had it not been that I was accompanied by Loup the second and by my violin, the present of Jean-Baptiste, who was the possessor of more than one. I can scarcely say that music was a passion with me in those days, for I could always be entirely happy without it; but it was an amusement to which I took at least as kindly as to the more ordinary pursuits of my age. Nor can I honestly say that it at that time ever stirred up any wonderful emotions within me. A sad tune used to make me feel sad, a merry one, merry—and a well-managed modulation would make my nerves creep and glow a little—but that was all. In fact, such airs as I knew were not of a character that was likely to produce any greater effect; although, no doubt, where there is genius, it may be called out by anything, however slight. But then to genius I have not pretended for many years past. Nevertheless, my violin was my constant companion; and I should as soon have thought of leaving the house without it as without my dog himself. On this occasion the weather was hot, and I presently grew tired of rambling; so it was the most natural thing in the world that I should sit down by the road-

side where I found myself, and amuse myself quietly in my favourite fashion with Loup for my audience—or rather not quietly, for he always howled most delightfully whenever I played certain passages that he seemed to find sympathetic.

I was so interested in this occupation that two strangers approached without my observing them, until I suddenly heard a loud burst of laughter within a few feet of where I was sitting.

Now it was not so rare as it had once been for strangers to be seen in the neighbourhood during the summer; for the picturesque had of late years begun to come into fashion, and it was no rare thing for artists and other tourists to find their way among us from Besançon, and the other towns in the same part of France. From my own small experience I could see that these two were tourists of one sort or another amusing themselves by walking through our beautiful hills instead of posting along the dusty highroad.

"*Bravissimi!*" exclaimed one of them—a tall, dark, and handsome man of about fifty years old, with bright black eyes. "That dog will be an acquisition to the *grand opéra*."

His companion, some fifteen or twenty years younger, and of a short, stout figure, was one whose hair, eyes, lips, and peculiar turn and carriage of the shoulders—that only infallible sign—marked him out as one of the house of Israel.

"Too many of them there already," he answered, "and of both sexes. This one certainly wouldn't be the worst of them, though. But we seem to have come upon a brother artist, besides the singer. Just play that again, my boy, will you?"

I was much too spoiled a child to be shy, and so I stood up and played willingly and at once. But Loup was not shy either, and spoiled the effect considerably.

"Do you never play anything

but accompaniments for *Maestro Lugubrioso* there?" asked the short man again.

"*Plait-il, M'sieur?*"

"I mean, does your dog always howl like that?"

"No, *M'sieur*—only at what he likes."

"Then play us something that he doesn't like, please."

I obeyed.

"Well done, my boy. But that isn't quite the right way, though," he continued; and then, taking my violin from me, and having put the strings in order, he *did* play.

After all, then, I had never heard music before!

"Oh, play something more, *M'sieur*—please!" I exclaimed, excitedly, when it was over.

He smiled, and then began something else. I felt the hills floating away before my eyes into infinite space. Who could this man be? and to think that my own poor fiddle should be capable of producing such sounds as these!

At last that also came to an end, and with the cadence my soul seemed to sink away also. I could not have spoken to save my life, and stood spell-bound.

"And who taught you to play, my boy?" asked this wonderful being.

"Who taught you, *M'sieur?*"

"Ha, ha, ha! You seem a strange fellow. If you wish to know, it was a certain stupid fellow they call Moretti."

"And where does he live?"

"Where does he live? In a place called Rome, if you know where that is. But why do you ask?"

"Because I will go to Rome!"

The two strangers first stared at me, then at one another, and then laughed again. I felt angry.

"I suppose, *M'sieur*," I said, "if he has taught you he can teach me too."

"Hm! That depends, my boy."

The tall man now addressed me for the first time; and he spoke

gravely and kindly. "Play me something else," he said: "something slower, if you can."

"Pardon me, *M'sieur*."

"Why not?"

"Because I will never play again until I have learned."

"That is to say you will never go into the water until you have learned to swim? So be it, then—never mind. What is your name? Do you belong to this place? Is this how you get your living?"

"Félix Crévillle, *M'sieur*. I live at Pré-aux-Fleurs—there up the hill."

"And do you get your living by your fiddle?"

"No, *M'sieur*. I live with Aunt Cathon and *Mère* Suzanne."

"And can you read?"

"Yes, *M'sieur*."

"And write?"

"Yes, *M'sieur*."

"Bravo! You are a fine fellow. Have you a father—a mother?"

"I never had either, *M'sieur*."

"You must have come into the world somehow, though. And how old are you?"

"I do not know, *M'sieur*."

"Ah, I see. And so you want to learn the violin?"

"I *will* learn it, *M'sieur*."

"That remains to be seen. How have you managed, so far?"

"I have not learned, *M'sieur*."

"How? You did not find it out by yourself, I suppose?"

"Ah, *M'sieur*! I know nothing. That is not playing."

Poor Jean-Baptiste!

"Well, so be it. And do you think Aunt Cathon or *Mère* Suzanne could find us a draught of milk at Pré-aux-Fleurs?"

"Oh, *M'sieur*!" I had hopes of more of that wonderful music from the stout violinist, who had been silent while the other was talking to me.

"Show us the way then," continued the tall stranger. "What shall you do with this franc piece?"

"I shall give it to Jean-Baptiste!"

"And who is Jean-Baptiste?"

"He gave me this violin. He taught me—what he knew."

"Ah! Give it him then, by all means; and this also," he added, increasing his gift. "He must be

a clever fellow, this Jean-Baptiste, and we will see him too, as well as Aunt Cathon and *Mère Suzanne*. And now we must be acquainted. This is my friend, Monsieur Prosper; I am Signor Moretti."

CHAPTER II.

And so it came about—though my excitement at the time confuses my memory considerably as to the exact details of the ensuing weeks, that the nature of my career in life became fixed. I was to become a musician, and was to learn my art in Paris. As to pecuniary means, I fear—I very much fear—that Father Laurent, in the course of the conversation which he held with my two new patrons, and of which I did not hear a word, but in the course of which I presume he was persuaded that my departure from my home under their auspices would prove the best thing for me, deceived them very considerably; and that I, ignorantly and unconsciously, robbed him of the greater part of an income from which, one would have thought, he could spare nothing. Nay, I fear also that I must thereby, to some extent, have robbed his poor.

Among the many faults of my nature of which I am conscious, I do not reckon ingratitude. On the contrary, a kindness even from a friend always weighs me down with a sense of obligation to such an extent that I scarcely like to receive a favour without an immediate prospect of returning it with interest, and fills my heart with an almost dog-like feeling towards him who confers it. And thus I can never recall this period of my life of which I now speak, child as I was, without undergoing a pang of regret, almost of remorse.

I had hitherto lived as my own dog had lived—that is to say, in an atmosphere of kindness, bestowed upon me so freely, so much as a matter of course, that I, consciously

at least, appreciated it no more than I consciously appreciated the fresh air of the hills. I could not, of course, have been kept and fed for nothing, and my peasant friends must often have found the times hard enough for themselves without an additional mouth to feed; and now, to crown it all, the Curé was depriving himself of what, judging from the slenderness of his purse, must have been almost necessities of life, in order to benefit me and give me a chance in the war of the great world. And yet, in spite of all this, and in spite of the affectionate sorrow that filled the whole place for days, and *Pré-aux-Fleurs* for weeks, before my departure—a sorrow that filled my own eyes with sympathetic tears—I was glad and eager to leave my home. It was a perfectly natural eagerness, no doubt, and I knew no more about the part that money plays in the world than I knew of the world itself; but I cannot, in my soul, excuse myself to myself, however much my unconscious ingratitude sprang from the innocence that belongs to ignorance. Alas! once more I fear that I found it really hard to part from none save Loup; and I was, with all my new artistic ambition, child enough to repent of the career I had chosen, when for the first time I had to go out of doors without him. The appealing look of mute wonder in his eyes when I, for the last time, embraced him and forbade him to follow me, haunted me for long; and all the more as there seemed to be something of rebuke and of warning in it. I used to imagine his long and weary waiting for my return, set-

ting down at last into the chronic dullness of a vacant life, such as crushes the nature of dogs even more than that of men; but I did not picture to myself, as I do now, Aunt Cathon and *Mère Suzanne* with the occupation that formed the one excitement of their hard monotonous peasant life for ever departed from them; Jean-Baptiste, weary of his fiddle, and perhaps consoling himself for the loss of a comrade, for whose sake I can see now that he had long kept himself within bounds, by a return to his wild ways; the Curé, without his pupil, and with his time heavy upon his hands. I am not guilty of vanity when I picture to myself all this. I know now how much love was mine in my old home.

Any one who knows anything of musical history will not need to be reminded that Signor Moretti was the greatest violinist and one of the most eminent composers of his day. Even still, in what I cannot help thinking to be degenerate days, his works contrive to hold their own. But, although I owe it to him that I became a musician, it is not my good fortune to be able to boast myself one of his immediate pupils. His light just shone upon me, and that was all. He lived in Rome; and for hundreds of reasons it was impossible that I could follow him there at once. But in Paris I found myself in good hands. I was the pupil of his pupil, Monsieur Prosper, for whom at first I entertained a shy dislike, owing to his brusque manners, his capricious temper, and propensity to ridicule; but it was not long before I pierced through the shell, and, according to my nature, came to feel a love that, born of gratitude, ripened into friendship.

Of course it will be understood that I am now beginning to refer to days long subsequent to my bewildering journey to Paris, the events of which are, like those of the days immediately preceding it, far too

dream-like to make a detailed narrative of them possible. All I know is that I did arrive some how, and was soon immersed in hard, dry exercises, that often made me repent, not almost, but altogether, of my ambition, and long for the liberty which I had enjoyed hitherto of making as many imperfect notes, slips in time, and barbarous graces as I pleased. I found very soon that music as an amusement and music as a profession are very different things. Still, however, I worked hard; and if I had not done so willingly, Monsieur Prosper would have made me do so against my will. He was the first person who ever really scolded me, and that is a real and startling experience in the life of a spoiled child.

He was certainly a good teacher, though he had but little enthusiasm even for his art, which he regarded strictly as a profession like any other profession, and as being after all, or rather above all, a means of making money. He treated it accordingly; and the result was, that while he did not, perhaps, know how to bring out any genius that might be latent in any of his pupils, he did most thoroughly teach all of them how to make the most of themselves in the way that the world admires. He had no crotchets, and scorned all systems that did not bear the seal of success. And yet he himself, with all his common-sense and all his Hebrew blood, was by no means a prosperous man. He was not content with living by his profession—he must needs become rich by it; and so he became, in effect, less an artist than an *imprésario* and theatrical speculator. In this capacity he had plenty of knowledge and plenty of boldness; but these good qualities were altogether neutralised by want of tact, want of temper, and want of capital. I am not quite sure that he was not at one time even director, or joint-director, or in some way mixed up

with the direction, of the *Grand Opéra* itself; certainly when I knew him he was always dabbling in a dozen theatrical affairs at once, with the very worst results to his own pocket. Sometimes, even, he was reduced almost to the very last straits; but, like the rest of his race, he was never at his wits' end, never lost confidence in himself, and never relaxed in his energy for a moment even at the worst of times. He was by no means liked in the profession, but I never heard even his worst enemies throw a shadow of suspicion upon his complete uprightness in all matters of business. If it were the case, as unhappily it is not, that success is always to be gained by working for it and deserving it, he would have died a millionaire.

This would have been a strange person to become my friend, were it not that friendship almost always contains an element of strangeness. I was still a boy; he almost middle-aged. I held transcendental views of life and art; he was an artistic adventurer. I thought only of the soul of music; he of little but its form. I was quiet, romantic, dreamy, and reserved; he, bustling, prosaic, energetic, and self-reliant. For some reasons it was well, for others not so, that I had a friend of this kind. At all events I learned a great deal from him and through him, not only about my profession, but about its professors. Connected as he was with almost all of them, my acquaintance with him laid bare to my unwilling eyes the wretched intrigues, the contemptible jealousies, the atmosphere of sordidness, of stupidity, of charlatanism, and of cant, the conventionalities and all the sickening littlenesses with which the glorious art of music was then and still is so utterly enveloped as to be almost suffocated. I learned that if an artist wishes to "succeed," as it is called, he or she must, in order to do so, lay aside all the better part

of himself and become, as the Germans say, a rank Philistine. I learned that almost all who style themselves artist are either hucksters or charlatans; that their critics are for the most part much the same, only with a stronger dash of dishonesty; and that audiences consist almost entirely of flocks of silly sheep, whom *clagues* and critics lead by the nose. If I seem to speak strongly upon this matter, I am glad of it. I would speak more strongly if I could; and I could do so without suspicion, inasmuch as I do not pretend that I personally should have succeeded any better than I have done even in a better state of things. Now, this early insight into the nature of the world in which I was henceforth to move, while it proved far from useless to me, was the cause of my losing a considerable amount of enthusiasm; and loss of enthusiasm for his art is the worst misfortune that can befall one who aspires to be an artist in any form. It was impossible for me not to lose a great deal of mine when I knew, for example, that some great *prima donna*, whose whole genius, or rather whose whole stock-in-trade, consisted of a tolerably good voice, neither worse nor better than that of nine women out of ten, had gained her public position by the path of private protection; that the enthusiastic crowd which took her horses from her carriage and drew her home in triumph consisted of supernumeraries of the theatre; that the applause that filled the house was originated and regulated by hands hired for the purpose; that the shower of bouquets thrown upon the stage were the lady's own property hours before they lay at her feet; that the critics who described it all in such glowing terms knew all this as well as, perhaps better than, I knew it, were even more ignorant of music than the audience, and wrote from no higher motive than love of their friends and hatred of their own and of their friends' foes. I fear it is

only too true that they not seldom wrote from very much lower motives. I remember, to cite one instance of what I mean, a certain leader of criticism in my own time, by whose powerscores of reputations were made and marred, who, whenever a singer was about to make a first appearance, would call and say, "Signor," or "Madame," or "Mademoiselle, I have already prepared three notices of your performance of to-morrow evening. The first, as you see here, is sufficiently favourable, and will insure you a *succès d'estime*: it is yours for so many francs. The second, which I also show you, clearly proves you to be the greatest singer of the past, of the present, and of the future: it is yours for so many francs more. The third, which it is unnecessary for you to see now, you may have *gratis*; but, if it appears, I do not think that you will care to sing in Paris again." I do not, of course, mean to say that in all countries musical criticism has attained to such a pitch of sublimity as this, or that in any country critical dishonesty is always of a gross and conscious kind. But I certainly do say that it needs every note that has ever been produced by true genius to prevent me from hating my art as much as I despise my profession. "It is an ill bird that fouls its own nest," they say; but in this case I am not ashamed to be called an ill bird.

But I am in effect anticipating; for my blindness was of course not removed immediately. I knew far too little of things or of people to lose the enthusiasm of my nature immediately; and for long I worked on in the belief, not only that my own merit was great, but that in art-matters merit must necessarily achieve success. Now, indeed, I should be very much tempted to say to any singer, composer, or other musician who asked me for the secret of success, "It is simple, and it is this: do *not* deserve it; for no man can serve two masters,

and the kingdom of Art is not of this world." Whether the same advice would be equally applicable to poets and painters, I know not; but I am sure, from long experience, that it applies to musicians. But I daresay that it does apply to all equally; that, in order to succeed,

"Musician, or Painter, or Poet,
We must speak as the world may
choose,
And for truest worship—show it
In silence to the Muse;"—

and that what the Muse chooses and what the world chooses are two very different things indeed. Of course I do not mean to say that good men never do succeed; on the contrary. But then it is by having other qualities besides merit.

I need not say that in those days I was poor enough; and that, as I grew in years and stature, I developed into a Bohemian of that famous tribe whose capital settlement used to be the Latin quarter. But of this part of my life I will say little, for Bohemia is Bohemia all the world over; and it would be unnecessary to describe it to those who have sojourned in it, and impossible to those who have not. I will only say that in those days the Latin country was in its glory, for they were the birthdays of the great romantic *renaissance*, or rather revolution, in Art and literature. Of course I was romanticist, heart and soul, and the word "classical" stank in my nostrils. In this respect I should very much like to chronicle some of my recollections, for the period is still replete with interest and importance. It was, of course, not the fortune of an obscure musical student like myself to see much of the heroes of that time, but still I could not help coming to know a great deal about them at second-hand. But I will refrain, for it is of myself that I am speaking now. With regard to myself, then, I added to my musical practice the scribbling

of much highly unclassical verse—of which, I am ashamed to say, the stanza that I have just quoted is a specimen—the growth of long hair, and, in general, as Byronic a style and demeanour as I could manage within my limited scope. I also, in a small way, liked to be considered rather a dangerous person, and longed to experience a *grande passion*. What was practically more important, I obtained through Monsieur Prosper a small theatrical engagement and a pupil or two of my own, and I have every reason to believe that my master was satisfied with my progress. Before very long I found myself justified in thinking that I might be able to carry out my childish impulse of visiting Signor Moretti at Rome, which had, ever since I had formed it, been the height of my ambition.

Everybody can point back to some particular period of his life as being distinctly the happiest; and the period of which I am now speaking was mine. I worked hard, I really loved my art, I was full of hope and confidence, my personal wants were few and easily satisfied, I had many acquaint-

ances, some friends, and much pleasure. If my purse was light, my heart was lighter still.

But one morning—how well I remember it!—when I was attending a musical rehearsal at the theatre, Monsieur Prosper came up to me and said,—

“I am getting to have too many irons in the fire, I am afraid. I have not time to attend properly to half of them, what with one thing and another. I must send off a few of my pupils, unless you will help me. I can turn over some of them to you very easily. For instance, there is the *pensionnat* of Madame Mercier. You don't profess the piano, of course; but you'll do very well for a week or two. I ought to go there to-morrow; but, as you know, my mornings are all otherwise engaged for a fortnight at least, so it is impossible. Will you take them off my hands just for the present? It will be worth your while.”

Of course I consented willingly; nor do I remember that I experienced the shadow of a presentiment of what was to come of my consenting to render Monsieur Prosper so apparently slight a service.

CHAPTER III.

On arriving punctually next morning at Madame Mercier's, I found that I had to give three lessons. My first pupil proved to be wholly uninteresting in every respect: indeed I can scarcely recall her to mind. The second was a young English lady, whom I remember well for many reasons, although but little for her own sake.

The hour which I had to devote to the latter had nearly expired when the door opened, and another young girl entered quietly and sat down in a retired part of the room, as though to wait until I should be disengaged. I just looked round for a moment, and saw that she started a little—I suppose that she

had expected to see Monsieur Prosper. More than that, however, I did not see just then, for she to whom my immediate attention was due was in the midst of a difficult passage, and making a mess of it. But when the lesson was over, I certainly did see something more. I do not know to what extent my face betrayed my admiration: to some extent, however, it must have done so, for she blushed a little as she curtsied to me, and then without a word walked straight to the piano. I did not hear her voice until she began to sing.

Neither was the voice in itself, nor was the use that she made of it, very wonderful: nor was it

even of a kind that I in general used to find sympathetic. Usually I care nothing for a voice, however beautiful it may be in other respects, that has not depth and shadow; and hers, although musical, was wholly without either. And yet somehow—how shall I possibly make myself intelligible?—it seemed to be sympathetic to a side of my nature that had never hitherto revealed itself to me save by dim and momentary flashes. Like certain other sounds, like certain colours, like certain odours, it seemed to speak of a life other than that which I always remembered to have lived since I was born: to be associated with one of which I was mysteriously conscious, but did not consciously remember. It carried my heart backward beyond the reach of memory altogether, and threw me into that state in which one is forced to believe in the doctrine that the soul lives, and enjoys, and suffers before it is born.

It was this, I think, even more than her great beauty, that made this third hour to rush by so rapidly, and myself to be filled with such a glow of strange happiness at its close. Of this my first interview with her I have of course nothing to say that can be expressed in definite words. Outwardly, it was nothing more than a mere ordinary music-lesson. But, in reality, it seemed to me to be nothing short of a revelation, though of a vague, unintelligible kind; nor did I care to make it clearer to myself, or to understand it better. I only felt that I had found my ideal, even though, as is always the case, it had proved to be altogether different from the ideal of my imagination.

I do not know whether my experience is singular or not. Judging from what men say, the special kind of sympathy which we call love is for the most part born unconsciously, and apart from any effort of the will. But I did not "fall in love." I sought it, and threw myself into it consciously

and intentionally. As I have already said, I was in search of a *grande passion*—of a heroine for all my dreams of romance: and if I had not found this particular heroine, I should inevitably have found another. But my temporary pupil had the advantage of fulfilling my whole ideal to perfection; and I think that she would have rendered me faithless to any heroine whom I might have fancied that I had found before seeing her. If I had had a Rosaline, as I had not, she would have proved my Juliet. She was beautiful beyond all question: she was herself romantic: she was a lady: she was herself to be an artist: and—not the least of her merits in the eyes of one of my character—she was poor and dependent: so that she was at one and the same time both my superior and my equal. Hitherto my acquaintance with women had been confined to our good comrades the *grisettes*, who had none of these advantages, excepting that of poverty: but now—

Well, as I have said, I chose her for my heroine deliberately and almost in cold blood: really, I believe, at first because I thought it the right thing to do. But, alas! "*On ne badine pas avec l'Amour.*" The more I came to see of her, the more my feeling towards her became less and less a matter of vanity, or even of mere admiration. Before long I forgot myself in her altogether. This is not a mere phrase: I mean literally what I say, let the reader shrug his shoulders as much as he pleases at the notion of carrying sentiment that is not born of passion to so extreme a length. I know that in this frigidly philosophical age no one ever suffers himself to feel an emotion that is inconsistent with prudence and comfort: I know that the extreme of sentiment shares a well-known quality of the sublime, and that the flights of sentiment in which the poets of another age used to in-

dulge, have come to be regarded as mere ornaments of a sort that has gone out of fashion, and that never at any time represented anything true or genuine. In so far as men now consider the desire of possession to be, after all, the ultimate cause of what is called love, I agree with them; but, at the same time, I know from my own experience, that in my own case love for a woman may be born in mere sentiment, and that mere sentiment may so continue to give it power and life, that passion may play a part that is so slight as to be indeed imperceptible. I certainly first of all loved, because I wished to love; and I continued to do so, because she whom I loved filled all my thoughts and all my fancies in a way with which mere passion could have had nothing to do; and this kind of love I hold to be the most overwhelming of all. Passion may be directed, if not conquered; but he is lost who becomes the slave of a dream.

After all, though, I daresay that almost every man, if the truth were known, has a romance of the same nature hidden away somewhere, even though in other respects his life is written in the plainest of prose. On this assumption I will cease to defend myself and my theories about this matter farther. In any case, I think I have said enough to show what I mean; and the subject is far too vague and complex to tempt me to go into it more deeply.

At any rate, without thinking of consequences, without even putting my hopes and wishes into shape, I indulged this new feeling of mine to the very utmost. I even continued to encourage it, even when it was full grown; and deliberately, something in the spirit of the Knight of La Mancha, sought to come up to the ideal of the lover of romance. And it was not long before I could not help seeing that the love which I had not as yet dared to declare, but yet had been unable to conceal, was far from being scorned.

How long in reality this state of things continued I am wholly unable to say. It must have lasted more than a moment and less than a century: but even so much certainty as that I do not derive from memory. But at last—again just after a rehearsal, and while I was putting my violin into its case—Monsieur Prosper, who was also present in some capacity or other, or, more likely, in several capacities at once, came up to me again. I had not seen much of him of late—indeed for that matter I had not seen much of any of my old friends for some little time past.

"Well," he said, in his usual abrupt manner, "and how did you find things going on up there? Are they in want of a *primo tenore*? Because, if so, I think we have just been listening to one that is quite out of his place among us poor mortals."

This was one of his ways of making enemies. He had a special knack of delivering his sarcasms just when they must necessarily be overheard by those at whose expense they were made.

"What is that you say, Monsieur Prosper?" asked our own *primo tenore*, who had just finished a grand *aria*, and was now passing us on his way out.

"Ah, pardon. I did not see you. I was only remarking to Monsieur Félix here how splendidly you brought out that *Ut de poitrine*—it was superb. It is really a shame that every violin in the place happened to be sharp at that exact moment. How was it, Félix? But you have not answered my question. Is it true that they believe in Rossini up there? Or have the mad doctors belied them?" Rossini, by the way, in his character of innovator, was, as a matter of course, a special aversion of Monsieur Prosper in those days before Paris had accepted him.

"Up where?"

"In the moon, of course. You have been there so long that I

thought you were going to stay there for good. My dear fellow, where in the world have you been all these weeks, that nobody has seen you?"

"My friends must have been very blind, then. I have been at the theatre every night."

"Ah, that is good! I have certainly seen some one not unlike you sitting in the orchestra—but yourself, no. And if I were you, and wanted a double to receive my salary for me while I was visiting the planets, I would at all events get one that would do me credit—who would neither cut my friends nor play out of time. Ah, it must be a big orchestra for me not to tell which instrument it is that is doing the mischief."

I generally took his scolding in as good part as it was meant. But this time I sympathised with the *primo tenore*. I was about to reply a little sharply, when a grave and strangely kind look came into his eyes, which made me silent at once.

His words, however, were less kind than the look which accompanied them. I do not think that he had the power of speaking quite seriously, even when he wished to do so.

"My dear Félix," he said, "whether you have been to the skies or not, I cannot help thinking—do you not feel it yourself?—that there are symptoms about you of the *Ange*—*sans G.*"

I guessed what he meant immediately, and have no doubt that my face showed that I guessed it. I coloured with the shame that every one feels when he finds that the romance of his life is read by worldly and unsympathetic eyes.

"I daresay there are," I said, as lightly as I could. "There are about most people, in one way or another."

"Yes—because they're born so; and I should never dream of quarrelling with them for it. On the contrary, I approve of the arrangement. But your ears are not long

by nature, my dear boy—at least not so very long, that is to say."

"Thanks for the compliment."

"Look here. You mean to be an artist, don't you?"

"Of course I do."

"Well then, I've known a great many artists in my time—a great many. And I've also known a great many men who had the stuff in them, and might have been artists, only——"

"Well?"

"Only some took to drink, and some took to—you know what I mean."

"Indeed I do not."

"Yes, you do. Flirt as much as you like: women are charming creatures, especially *coquettes*; and it's a useful excitement. I do it myself whenever I get the chance—and I do get the chance sometimes, though I'm not exactly *beau garçon*. Have as many *liaisons* as you please: it's the best way of getting to learn the world and how to keep straight and safe in it, if you can spare the time, which I confess I can't. But, in the name of thunder, keep clear of a grand passion! I know something of such things; and I know a great deal about you. And I tell you, I, Louis Prosper, that no real artist ever cared for a woman above his art—that is, above himself, which is the same thing; and that is what you seem to be in a fair way of doing. You are quite capable of it. And I won't have my best pupil spoiled before my eyes by the best she of them all if I can help it."

This was certainly a little too much for me to stand. "And what——" I was beginning, when he interrupted me by laying his arm upon my shoulders while he shrugged his own.

"Ah, you think me a stupid old fellow?" he said; "but you are wrong. It is you who are the stupid young one. This wonderful she is to be your loadstar, and all that sort of thing, is she not? I

know. But what would you? Perhaps you have not thought? *Eh bien!* I have thought, though."

"I do not see what business it is of any one but myself."

"Perhaps you don't. But it is. Do you think I say all this for the sake of your own *beaux yeux*? Bah! not Louis Prosper! Perhaps you will think next that he has not been teaching you for his own sake? A likely thing, indeed! *Corpo d'un cane!* I thought better things of you, my dear Félix, than that you should risk your career for a fancy—as you are, I can very well see. I know you. You will end either in the Morgue or in marriage; and either way there will be an artist spoiled. Come—think of me: think of Moretti. Do you think he made his *concerto* in A sharp minor by falling in love? Not he—it was by keeping his brain clear and his heart whole: and yet he was a man *aux bonnes fortunes*. But then a *bonne fortune* is not a grand passion, you understand? Do you think that I made my—— Be a man. Take some little Pauline or Adèle from the *corps de ballet* to make you comfortable till you can afford to look higher. There are plenty who would jump at you in this very house, not to speak of elsewhere, and who would not expect champagne every day. Stick to your fiddle, crop your ears, send love to his father, who is the devil, and come and dine with me. *Sole Normande*—cutlet *financière*—a salad—a glass of Yquem? Will that suit you? And, by the way, I shall be able to go myself to Madame Mercier's again now. Never mind, though, you shall have another pupil to make up. *Au revoir, mesdemoiselles*. Come, Félix, I have forgotten my breakfast long ago."

But I was by no means grateful for his intended kindness.

"Thanks, Monsieur Prosper," I said, as coldly and stiffly as I could, "I have an engagement;" and walked away in a rage.

He shrugged his shoulders once more. "I must dine alone, then," I heard him say to himself. "Poor fellow! It's always the way. Yes, it's quite true—women *are* the devil; there's no doubt about it."

Monsieur Prosper was certainly not a man of tact. His advice had been altogether well meant, but it had, as may well be supposed, jarred upon me altogether. It was not that I objected to it in the least from a moral point of view, although, no doubt, I ought to have done so; for the atmosphere that I had breathed since leaving my old home was certainly not less free than that of the latter, and infinitely less pure. My childhood was not strict, to say the least of it. But this rigmarole, as it seemed to me, of flirtations, *bonnes fortunes*, marriage, the Morgue, Moretti, the *corps de ballet*, and *sole Normande*, was wholly out of harmony with the key in which my life seemed now to be set unchangeably. If he had actually mentioned her name in the same breath with all these things, I do not think I could have borne it. As it was, I almost think that though Monsieur Prosper was my friend, and I knew it, I for some minutes knew what is meant by the word hate. Had some evil genius just then transported us both to some quiet spot in the Bois, and changed our bows into swords, I think I should, at all events, have gone so far as to cry out "*En garde!*"

As I am speaking of what I felt at this moment, I may as well finish. It almost invariably happens, that when one feels most strongly, one is then most liable to be impressed by any grotesque image that may chance to present itself. The intense absurdity of the idea of Monsieur Prosper being made to flourish a small sword almost made me laugh aloud as I walked along, and certainly made me repent of the manner in which I had parted from him. But, at the same time, though I did

him justice in this respect, I was unconsciously harbouring a feeling which lasted more or less strongly for days, and which was far less excusable than my anger. I felt a positive disgust for music—not as a profession, but as an art and as itself—for my friends, for every person, and for everything, in short, that had happened since I had left my true home. And why? Because, forsooth, I was the Marquis de Créville, and Monsieur Prosper was only a Jew fiddler! The blood which I had derived from ancestors, not so far back as the common ancestor of us all, but from knights and barons of the Crusades, from *Maréchaux de France*, and from fine gentlemen and finer ladies of more recent times—each and all of whom would have treated him as a creature that might be useful and amusing enough in his proper place, but, to gentlemen and good Christians, otherwise unclean—seemed all of a sudden to rebuke me for having not only made this man my friend, but for having made him my friend to such an extent as to have given him a right to find fault with me, and for having allowed him to degrade me to a position which they would have regarded as being no higher or better than that of a mountebank. And what was this thing called Art, after all, if it could only be served by a man's throwing himself under its chariot-wheels, and sacrificing to it all the best part of human nature? What but a Moloch, worse than the Baal of the world? Prosper's whole doctrine had disgusted as much as his manner of stating it had offended me: and as I could argue neither against the truth of what he had said nor against the merit of his intentions towards myself, I had to throw myself back upon my fictitious superiority of rank and race, and to soothe myself with the absurd consciousness that I, as a gentleman born, must needs have finer feelings and truer instincts than he. And so, perhaps,

I had; but assuredly not because I had a claim to call myself Marquis, while he was an artist and nothing more. Certainly pride, or, as I should prefer to call it, vanity of birth, must be a very ineradicable thing if I, who have, as a good child of the Republic, believed in equality and fraternity from my cradle, was guilty of so gross a lapse into it as this; and if it often takes such a form as it did with me then, it must be as contemptible as it is ineradicable.

Before evening came, my heroine had heard from me the whole story of my love. The next morning, in all the intoxication of triumph, I told Monsieur Prosper what I had done. But he only shrugged his shoulders once more, and said nothing.

And now followed a season, not of happiness, but of glorious fever. I loved and was loved; and, as if that were not sufficient, mine was a love of which the course must needs be anything but smooth. It also had—though I scarcely know how or why—an element of mystery about it that made it more exciting still. I think that we both preferred that this should be so; she certainly did. So my whole time became taken up with contriving meetings, in looking forward to them till they came, and in thinking about them when they were over. Most people, I doubt not, would have called me dissipated while I was a sufficiently good fellow among my comrades, and would have considered that a serious passion had steadied me; for the free life of my friends was mine no more. What they thought of me I do not know, for I never cared to know. It was now that I was really dissipated, both morally and intellectually. I still studied a little, but no longer in the spirit of a student; for my heart was no longer in anything that had not reference to her. I have heard of such a passion producing an opposite effect; of its acting as a

healthy tonic, and not as a poisonous stimulant; of its leading men to do great things and to make the best of themselves. But I did not find it so; and so far, at least, Monsieur Prosper had not proved to be wrong in his estimate of my character. Indeed I am, on the whole, inclined to agree with him in holding that the less a would-be artist has to do with really serious passion, the better for him as an artist. By serious love I do not, of course, mean the passion that endures for a season only, however strong it may be while it lasts: I mean that which colours a man's life and changes his character: I mean that which by its very nature can never bear good fruit. After all, the cultivation of art depends, more than any other human pursuit, upon the even and harmonious working to one and the same single end of the brain, of the senses, and of the soul. The greatest artists of modern times have been just those whose natures have been the least disturbed by external influence: some, by reason of a strength that has enabled them to throw off emotion at will; others, by reason of an incapacity of receiving any emotion not in harmony with their true selves. And so it will be found that the cardinal doctrine of the gospel of Art, as of the gospel of Christianity, is the subjugation of external nature; and that before a man can rightly express human emotion and its results, he must not only cease to be a slave to it, but become its master. Very few are born masters: not many are born freemen. And so let not the artist love too well: let him beware of going beyond mere passion, which passes, and friendship, which strengthens and does not disturb. I own that this is a cold, a disagreeable, and an unpopular creed; but then truth is apt to be cold, disagreeable, and unpopular. He who would be a priest of the temple must submit to lead a life apart from other men. It may be that he can best express

emotion who can feel it most; but then he must use his power of feeling as a slave—not obey it as a tyrant.

But since in my case these considerations came too late, and love had proved himself conqueror, why, it might be asked, did not these two, if they were really in love, do as hundreds of others have done in their place—Why did they not honestly make up their minds, poor as they were, to fight the battle of life bravely side by side, and to bear all things for each other's sake until, for each other's sake, they had gained what the world calls victory?

Yes, but I was living in a dream. I never thought of, or realised, anything except that I loved and was loved. She had no friends to compel me to think of what was right or wrong, wise or foolish. There was no one to bring me to a pause with a sudden demand to know what were my "intentions"—that is the right form, I believe—and a man who is blindly in love is not very likely to ask himself his own. Who, indeed, shall give reasons for what he does or does not do in a dream? And what man who really loves ever has "intentions?"

One wet and miserable morning—do I not remember it well?—we had met in the gardens of the Tuileries, which was an occasional place of *rendezvous* for us as for many another pair of lovers. She was looking marvellously beautiful even for her: indeed it is as I saw her then that I like best to think of her, and none the less that her beauty was increased by a slight shadow of sadness—in spite of which she made full amends for the absence of the sun.

Of course I told her so, but did not call a smile to her face. On the contrary, she, instead of heeding my words, gave me her hand to hold and began herself to speak.

"Oh, how shall I tell you what has happened?"

Her tone was more than enough to alarm me too much to allow of my doing more than question her silently.

"Miss Raymond has just told me that she leaves Paris. What is to be done?"

"That she leaves Paris!" I could only say, with a sinking heart; for I somehow felt a presentiment that this meant the end of my dream—that I must answer her question about what must be done.

"It is only too true. She is going back to England."

Now if I had been capable of looking forward at all, I should have known that this must have happened sooner or later. But then I had not been capable of looking forward. In my heart I had been fancying that the present was to last for ever; and so the news came upon me like a blow that made my heart stand still. That I must actually have turned pale and faint I could read in the sudden look of anxiety that filled her eyes.

"When did you hear this?" was all I could manage to say.

"This morning."

"And that you go with her? Surely you cannot mean that?"

"I must, dearest Félix."

We were silent for a full minute. Then I said,—

"Do not go, remain here—be my wife."

I daresay that I spoke coldly and quietly; for words are always cold and tame when the heart is full. The tongue has a pride of its own; and when it cannot express all, it prefers to express nothing. But then, when the heart is full to overflowing, there is no need of words. Doubtless my eyes spoke for me—at all events I looked with so much eagerness of anxiety as to see the "yes" for which my soul longed hanging upon her lips. But it did not reach my ears.

"Why do you wait to answer?" I went on, suddenly and quickly;

VOL. CVII.—NO. DCLIV.

"are we not one already, in everything but in name? Surely Miss Raymond has no claim upon you now, when we belong to each other. Tell her, then, that you cannot go with her to England; that you cannot live in one land while your heart is in another. Have you not said so to me many times? As for a year or two of poverty, that shall be our pride! We will conquer the world together, which will conquer us if we part; and to part even for a time, without seeing an end to our parting, is to risk everything without need. We two, who live outside the world and scorn it, must not make marriage and love a question of so many francs. Do you give me the present, Angélique, and I will answer for your future! and I will find strength and courage for both. It is for your sake I ask you: if you wish me to be worthy of you, if you ever wish to be proud of me, you must give me the power, and you must give it now. Did I not tell you that you were my sun? and would you suddenly plunge me into darkness, when you might, with a word, make me all, I swear to you, that even you could wish me to be?"

"And you are not strong enough to wait—to trust me!"

"To trust you?—for ever! But to wait? No—when there is no need—when you can come to me now. Is it you that are not strong enough to trust me? Do you not believe that with you I can do all things—without you, nothing? Angélique, I will not lose you, if I can help it, even for a day; for without you, a day would seem eternal. I have asked you for your own sake—I now ask you for mine. Stay with me—do not let us risk the good part of our lives lightly: nothing calls you away. Oh, Angélique, what can I say more than that I will live for you for ever—that you *shall* be proud of me, and that my life is in your hands?"

She had started when I first asked her to remain with me; and

during the rest of my appeal she had never raised her eyes. Now she gave a deep sigh, and I felt the hand, which I still held closely, tremble; but instead of saying "yes," she only answered—

"But I *must* go now."

And nothing more than this, in spite of all that I could say, could I obtain from her. Indeed I must confess that my own arguments were bad enough, in all conscience. I could only promise her a life of poverty, to say the least of it. I could only endow her with the wealth of a future that had as yet given no tangible sign; and I could not justifiably—as any sensible person would hold—ask her to give up her life of comfort and luxury in order to live in some poor garret in the midst of my not very reputable theatrical surroundings, from which it must needs be not a few but a great many years before I could even hope to emerge. I fear that the impulses of love are often terribly selfish, even when they are the purest and the most sincere. She said nothing about this, of course. I, consciously at least, did not think it; but I must have known in my soul that I was doing wrong. But still, right or wrong, for her to leave me and go to a land of which I knew nothing, where anything, for what I knew,

might happen—where she might die, where she might forget me, where she would at least be surrounded by a new atmosphere, by new scenes, by new faces, and, worst of all, by new admiration—the thought was simply unbearable. He who loves as I loved, must, it seems, be jealous of something; and I was now jealous of England—of the whole world. And so I continued to urge her, though against all right and reason. But it was in vain.

Nevertheless we did not part so. It was to be our last meeting; for although Miss Raymond was not to set out for England immediately, she was to leave Paris at once. And though my mistress would not grant my desire for an immediate marriage, I had no reason otherwise to complain. She convinced me that it was from no want of affection that she withheld her consent; and our last words were vows of eternal faith and constancy, whatever might happen.

And so the first part of my dream came to an end. I saw her again, indeed, several times before she left the French shore, but only from a distance. But very soon I lost even this poor consolation, and then Paris became a desert to me indeed.

THE PRINCESSE DES URSINS.

THE dynasty of the Bourbons in Spain, which has just ended in a woman, was founded by a woman; for it was the Princesse des Ursins who was veritably Queen of Spain for the first fifteen years of their domination; and without the aid of her protection, courage, and indomitable spirit, the descendants of Philip V. would never have occupied the throne of Spain.

This extraordinary person has hitherto obtained too little consideration in the page of history. Writers, relying almost solely on the pages of St Simon, have passed her by as a mere *intriguante*; but there was infinitely more than this in the Princesse des Ursins. She was the incarnate representative of the French spirit of progress in Spain, a female politician of the school of Richelieu and Colbert; she thoroughly understood by what means a stable government was to be secured for the country with which the peculiar circumstances of her early life had made her acquainted before the Bourbon accession; she had entirely comprehended by what measures bankrupt, beggarly, incapable Spain could be raised again in the scale of nations. The chief of these measures were the repression of the superb, punctilious, and factious spirit of the *grandees*, the reform in taxation and administration of the finances, the assimilation and centralisation of the charter-system of provincial rights, privileges, and legislatures (the provincial *fueros*) which embarrassed the operations of government, and the suppression of ecclesiastic immunities in a country which was being yearly devoured by priests

and monks. For the Spain which Charles II. had left behind him was a desert land, eaten up by *grandees* and churches and convents. After fifteen years of immense activity, Madame des Ursins, without a moment's warning, was forcibly seized in the middle of a horribly cold December night and carried out of Spain; but the greater part of the reforms she set on foot ultimately took root; and if Spain under the Bourbons rose in the scale of nations, much of the credit is due to Madame des Ursins. Although her sudden fall was owing directly to the ordinary ingratitude of absolute monarchs, yet the inspiring primal causes were the machinations of the *grandees* whose authority she had curtailed, joined to the dark workings of the Inquisition. To the honour of Madame des Ursins she dared to proclaim herself the enemy of this abominable institution; and the first, a small but ultimately deadly wound, which their power received, came from the hand of a woman, and that of a woman of nearly eighty years of age.

For, strange to say, the historic career, the public life, of Madame des Ursins did not begin till she was sixty-five years old. Her long life may be divided into five portions—that of the handsome, brilliant, witty, and intelligent Mademoiselle de la Tremoille up to the age of twenty-two; that of the loving and devoted wife, the Princesse de Chalais, up to the death of her first husband, Adrien Blaise de Talleyrand, Prince de Chalais, in 1670, when she was thirty-five years of age; that of the great Duchesse

'La Princesse des Ursins. Essai sur sa vie et son caractère politique d'après de nombreux documents inédits.' Par M. François Combes. Paris, 1858. This volume, two volumes of Correspondence of the Princess, published by M. Geffroy, and the Mémoires of the time, have given us the materials out of which the present article is constructed.

de Bracciano, when she was the leader of fashion and of elegant amusements in the great Orsini palace in the Piazza Navona, at Rome, after her second marriage in 1675; that of the Princesse des Ursins, which title she took after the death of the Duke of Bracciano in 1698, when her diplomatic and political career first commenced; that of the ex-regent of Spain, during her second residence at Rome, from 1715 to 1722, where she died at the age of eighty-seven.

If the Princesse de Chalais had been a mother, we might never have heard of the Princesse des Ursins; but, a solitary widow, childless and without scope for her great intelligence and her deeply affectionate nature, she seems to have thrown herself in the decline of life, when the brilliance of her beauty no longer inspired the makers of sonnets and madrigals, upon diplomacy and politics, from the very lack of womanly occupation.

She first became acquainted with Spain in 1663, when she accompanied her first husband, the Prince de Chalais, in his flight from France to escape the sanguinary edicts of Richelieu still in force against duelling. He had fought in one of the duelling encounters so common among the nobility of the Fronde, a duel of four against four, in which the Duc de Beauvilliers had been killed. From Spain they passed to Italy, where the Prince died while away from his wife at Venice. The Princess, who was at that time at Rome, showed exemplary grief as a widow, and gained the sympathies of all Roman society. She remained for some time secluded in a convent, and only five years afterwards accepted the hand of the Duke of Bracciano, the head of the Orsini family. This marriage, however, was not a happy one: the Duke and Duchess had different tastes and divergent views in politics. The Orsini Palace was, however, the centre of all that was distinguished in Rome. The Duchess

supported the honours of her position with consummate grace, but also with a great deal of extravagance—an additional item in the Duke's list of complaints against her, for from the age of forty to the commencement of her diplomatic career, she seems to have taken part with a ready spirit in all the joyous follies of Roman life, in all "the revel and the masque of Italy," and to have wanted no taste for art or for the growing superiority of Italian music. She was, according to St Simon, well qualified to take the lead in any line of life. She was above the middle height, with blue eyes which expressed anything she pleased; she had a perfect figure and bust; a face without regular beauty, but yet charming; a noble air, an exquisite and natural grace. St Simon, whose experience was great, said he never saw anything approaching her charm of manner; it was flattering, caressing, animating, yet kept always in due limits, as though she wished to please merely for the sake of pleasing. It was impossible to resist her when she had set her heart on captivating and seducing. With all this, a most agreeable voice and a faculty in conversation delicious, inexhaustible, and highly entertaining. Since she had seen many countries and all their chief people, she was, moreover, a great judge of character; she attracted to her the best society, and kept quite a little court of her own; and from her position at Rome, and intimacy with the Roman cardinals, she became a mistress in that art of polished and subtle intrigue of which the Papal Court was the unrivalled school. The portrait of St Simon, even in this reduced form, will afford some explanation of the absorbing fascination which the Princesse des Ursins exercised on the young, brilliant, devoted, and heroic-natured Marie Louise, the first wife of Philip V. "Don't let her speak to you for two hours," said Philip V. to his second wife, as she was

about to meet the Princesse des Ursins in her first and only interview, "or she will enchain you for ever." During the time of her second marriage she made sundry visits to France, and renewed her acquaintance with Madame de Maintenon, of whom she had been a rival in the salons of the Hôtel d'Albret when the latter was only Madame Scarron and she herself was but a girl. It may be imagined that the unrivalled position and influence of Madame de Maintenon may have stimulated the seeds of ambition hitherto dormant in her nature, for she certainly was conscious of no inferiority to Madame de Maintenon. It has been even said that she nourished secretly the design of displacing the rigid favourite in the good graces of Louis XIV. Of this there is no proof, but at any rate she was sufficiently conscious of her abilities and her power of command to look out for a theatre for her activity; and the force of circumstances, as well perhaps as her own calculations, drew her to Spain.

During the time of her visits to France and to Versailles the question of the Spanish Succession was agitating all Europe; and, as is well known, it was the opinion of Innocent XI., formally expressed in a letter, which finally determined the moribund Charles II. to draw up his famous testament in favour of the Duke d'Anjou, grandson of Louis XIV. The Duchess of Bracciano, connected by alliance with the greatest Pontifical families, with her little court in the Piazza Navona, attended by Roman cardinals, seemed a person deserving of the attention of the French Government. She was thoroughly tutored in the matter by Torcy, the French minister, and it was recommended to her diplomatic advocacy at Rome. She had the credit of having exercised a real influence upon the judgment of Innocent XI.; but she achieved something more effective even than this. Portocarrero, the Archbishop

of Toledo, the greatest ecclesiastic in Spain, the confidential adviser and minister of Charles II., came to Rome to receive the *pallium* and the cardinal's hat. She completely captivated Portocarrero, and elicited from him a promise to advocate the French claims to the succession with Charles II. When Louis XIV. knew that Portocarrero was won over, he considered the matter settled. He granted a pension to the Duchess of Bracciano, and Torcy wrote that he had now only to lower his flag before her in matters of diplomacy, and to become her pupil.

But neither Louis XIV., nor Torcy, nor Madame de Maintenon, had any notion of the heights to which ambition was now leading the Duchess of Bracciano, who, on the death of her husband, appeared before the world as the Princesse des Ursins, Ursins being the French for Orsini, her late husband's family name. The Duke had become reconciled to her before he died, and left her all he possessed; but she disposed of the duchy and title of Bracciano to Don Luigi Odelscalchi, her late husband's kinsman. The young Duke of Anjou had now gone to Spain, and taken the title of Philip V., and was about to be married to a princess of Savoy, aged fourteen, the daughter of the wily Victor Amadeus, and the sister of the Duchesse de Bourgogne. According to the usage of the Spanish Court, the *camerera mayor*, the head lady-in-waiting of the Queen, was an indispensable and awful functionary, a sort of female grand inquisitor of etiquette, to whom constant domesticity with the royal couple gave terrible power and authority. If such was the case ordinarily, what ascendancy might not a *camerera mayor* such as the Princesse des Ursins attain over the minds of a boy king and a girl queen in the present condition of Spain?

Such was the reasoning of Madame des Ursins as she set about

diplomatising for the post of *camerera mayor*; and she diplomatised in a way which proved her admirable sagacity in the ways of courts, and her knowledge of the natures of kings and ministers. She was by no means so impolitic as to ask at once for the post, which was of course virtually in the gift of Louis XIV.: such a proceeding, she knew, would raise the suspicions of the politic monarch in her disfavour. She asked merely, as a preliminary, for the honour of being the lady attendant who, as custom was, accompanied a Spanish royal bride across the frontier. But she had already previously carefully prepared her way to Madrid by gaining entirely the friendship of Portocarrero in her intercourse with him at Rome, and by acquiring the favour of the Duchesse de Bourgogne, and of the Piedmontese Court, through her activity in obtaining the goodwill of the great Spanish ecclesiastics and grandees for the Piedmontese marriage of Philip V.

Carefully and cautiously did she gradually disclose the real object of her diplomacy, working by turns through her friend, the Maréchal de Noailles, through the Maréchale, the friend of Madame de Maintenon, through Madame de Maintenon herself, through Torcy the minister. The Maréchale de Noailles, later called by the wits of Versailles the mother of the ten tribes of Israel (she had twenty-two children), was fully equal to the confidence reposed in her by the Princesse des Ursins and to the occasion. "I think," the Princess suggested to Madame de Noailles, "that if I was in a good position I might make rain and sunshine in the Court of Spain; and that it would be easy enough for me to establish a *dozen of mesdemoiselles vos filles* in that country." Moreover, the young Duc d'Ayen, the eldest son and heir of the Noailles, was named for a mission to Spain at the Court of Philip V. The Princesse des

Ursins took care to recommend him carefully to Portocarrero and her friends among the grandees; and when the Duc d'Ayen, who had himself considerable tact and ability, was making way to the favour of king and court, she began to make use of his influence in the most delicate way possible—for it naturally required great nicety of management for an elderly lady of the great position of the Princess to solicit any favour of so young a man as the Duc d'Ayen at the very outset of his career. The way in which she approached the young Duke was a model of diplomatic subtlety. "What opinion can you have of us Roman ladies," she wrote, "when you see me making advances towards you, and giving myself the honour of writing to you, *before you have discovered this confidence of mine?*" A more subtle turn of expression for saving her dignity could hardly be invented. The Princess, having thus broken the ice, continues her letter by asking the Duke to speak of her to Philip V. as a lady fitted to perform the merely honorary charge of conducting his young bride to Madrid. Next she brought into play her old intimacy with Portocarrero; and Portocarrero, in pursuance of former promises, and at the Princess's suggestion, sent her a letter representing that, in his opinion and that of the chief statesmen of Spain, the Princesse des Ursins was admirably qualified for the distinction she desired. This letter of Portocarrero was duly forwarded to the Maréchale de Noailles, who laid it before the French minister, Torcy; but Torcy replied that the selection must depend on the choice of Victor Amadeus, Duke of Savoy, the father of the future Spanish bride.

The Princesse des Ursins, however, was not to be put off with such a reply. She knew that Torcy was favourably inclined towards her, and she now, through her friend the Maréchale, made another

fine diplomatic suggestion, to the effect that Torcy should pay a visit to the Piedmontese ambassador at Paris, and should, just in the way of *casual conversation*, carelessly inquire whom the Duke of Savoy thought of naming as travelling *chaperone* to the Piedmontese princess, and then just as carelessly throw out a hint that the Princesse des Ursins would perform such a service admirably well. The Princess, knowing the ways well of kings and ambassadors, was sure the ambassador would report this conversation to the Duke of Savoy. The event justified her prevision, for on writing a letter with her own hand to the Duke of Savoy, he replied that he himself was not opposed to her request, only he referred the matter to Louis XIV. This was precisely the point to which the Princess desired to come—that Louis XIV. and the Court of Versailles should have the absolute decision of the affair. All her diplomatic stratagems now, therefore, were made to converge on Madame de Maintenon and Louis XIV. himself. She approached Madame de Maintenon in the subtlest and most refined insinuations of flattery; and as for Louis XIV., she, with a consummate air of much self-denial and modesty, requested that it should be represented to him that she would only, if it seemed best, *go as far as the frontier* in an official position, and afterwards proceed to Madrid to pay her court to the young King and Queen in a private capacity; and indeed, moreover, *she really had business at the Spanish capital*. Were the meshes of diplomacy ever spun of a finer and subtler texture than these? Nevertheless, Louis XIV., with his appreciation of character and his knowledge of the ways of ambition, saw perhaps before anybody through those fine-drawn manoeuvres, and was not displeased by them. He saw clearly that what Madame des Ursins

really was aiming at was the post of *camerera mayor*. Nevertheless the salutary advice he had given to his grandson on his departure for Spain was to take care that all his chief officers were Spaniards, and not to favour the French and arouse feelings of national jealousy; he consequently had his doubts about the advisability of naming a French lady for so thoroughly Spanish a dignity as that of the *camerera mayor*. But he also had advised Philip V. to place every confidence in Portocarrero, and Portocarrero was not only wholly gained over by the Princesse des Ursins, but Portocarrero produced some very solid reasons why, in the present instance, a Spanish lady ought *not* to fill the post, and why the choice of a foreign noblewoman, who had no family to lead into honours, dignities, and pensions, and was thus not calculated to excite the jealousy and animosity of families rivalling with her own, would in every respect be preferable.

Madame de Maintenon's mediation was the last and great trump-card which the Princess laid down upon the hesitation and scruples of Louis XIV. The game was won, and she was actually named *camerera mayor* before she had quitted Rome, and before the young Piedmontese princess had left Turin.

The Princesse des Ursins began forthwith to organise her household so that she might enter Spain in due state. She strained all her resources to make a fitting display in the eyes of a people fond of pomp. "I have usually four gentlemen in waiting," she wrote to the Maréchal de Noailles; "now I take another, a Spaniard; and when at Madrid I shall take two or three more, who shall be well acquainted with the Court and be calculated to do me credit. Of the four which I now entertain, two are French and two are Italian. One of the latter is of one of the best Sicilian families, the other is a near relative of Prince Vaini." She increased her

pages to the number of six—"tous gens de condition et capables d'être chevaliers de Malte." She had her chaplain. "I do not speak of my other attendants; I have these of every kind. I have twelve lackeys—my ordinary supply. When arrived at the Court, I will increase the number with Spaniards." She had one very fine carriage, "*sans or ni argent néanmoins*;" but she had another, a gilded state-carriage, lately ordered; this was to go with six horses when she drove outside Madrid. However, she assures her correspondent, the mother of twenty-two children, with an eye on the royal coffer, that she will not have recourse to the treasury of Louis XIV. "*Je suis gueuse, il est vrai; mais je suis encore plus fière*." "On this occasion I will make it a point of honour not to demand anything. Nevertheless my expenses shall be suited to the splendour of my position, and shall make the Spaniards admire the greatness of the King." However, it appears that, on the eve of embarking on her great enterprise, she began to think seriously of the difficulties into which she was about to plunge. "I believe," she wrote to Torcy, "that I shall meet with as many adventures as Don Quixote in the undertaking you impose upon me."

She met the young Princess Marie Louise de Savoie at Villafranca, near Nice, to which place she had gone by sea. She was delighted with the appearance of the young queen, and wrote to Torcy, "*qu'elle saurait faire la reine à merveille*;" and, indeed, Marie Louise, without being a perfect beauty, was a worthy sister of the Duchess de Bourgogne, the darling of Louis XIV. and the Court of Versailles. She was tall and well made, with a brilliant though pale complexion, with a loving heart and a noble nature, thoroughly capable of appreciating the fine qualities of Madame des Ursins, to whom she speedily attached her-

self with childish affection. From Villafranca and Nice the *camerera mayor* travelled through the south of France, side by side with her young charge, in a litter, to Figuières, on the Spanish frontier. There is no need to say that they were received with royal honours and discharge of artillery at every town on their route, and that, according to invariable Spanish custom on arriving at the frontier, the Piedmontese attendants were dismissed, and their place supplied by the stiff and formal ladies of Spain.

The marriage was to take place at Figuières, and Marie Louise was to enter Spain as queen in fact and in name. The young couple—the King of eighteen and the bride of fourteen—were duly united; but after the marriage ceremony some incidents ensued of an amusing character, most characteristic of Spain, and of the usual reception of royal Spanish brides.

The supper had been prepared half of French and half of Spanish fashion; the dishes half of one kind and half of the other. But the Spanish ladies—the attendants of their new young Queen—had visited the supper-table before the royal couple sat down, and saw with disgust this array of heretical French meats on the table. Ever since the beginning of time, so to speak, the Spaniards had insisted that the brides of their sovereigns should, immediately on entering Spain, become pure Spanish at once, conform to the severe usages of Spanish etiquette, and take to the Spartan diet, the national *puchero*, and the garlic of Spain. The Spanish ladies at once seized these abominable French inventions, and threw them into corners of the room and out of windows into the street. This energetic proceeding naturally caused immense surprise to the only three foreign persons of the party at Figuières—to the young King and his bride, and to the Princesse des Ursins. Nevertheless, all had sufficient self-command to go

through the supper without remark. However, as soon as the young Queen was alone with her husband and the Princesse des Ursins, her indignation broke loose. She sobbed, she wept, and she stormed. She complained bitterly of the dismissal of her Piedmontese attendants. She was indignant at the coarseness of the Spanish ladies, and declared that she would go no farther, but return to Piedmont. It was impossible to appease the wrath of the young bride. Philip finally left the room, hoping that, in his absence, the indignation of the Queen would subside; but there was no sign of this. Marie Louise passed the night obstinately alone, declaring, in spite of all the remonstrances of Madame des Ursins, that she would return instantly back to Turin. Here was a scandalous beginning of royal wedded life! The poor child did not recover even on the following day from her ill-humour and vexation; so on the following night, Philip himself, acting on the advice of his chief gentleman-in-waiting, assumed the air of the injured party, and sent word to his Queen that he would retire to rest alone. This brought Marie Louise to reason. She apologised for her childish conduct, promised to behave in future like a queen and a woman; and on the third morning after the marriage the young couple left Figuières completely reconciled.

Madame des Ursins, in the commencement, wisely confined her cares to the duties of her office, which were for the most part of a singularly domestic character for a descendant of the great family of the Tremouilles. She writes to the Maréchal de Noailles, "Dans quel emploi, bon Dieu! m'avez vous mise? Je n'ai pas le moindre repos."

In fact, the Princess writes she could neither take her ease after dinner, nor eat when she was hungry. She was only too happy to snatch a bad meal as she ran on

her duties. It was, she said, very rare for her not to be called the moment she sat down to table. "In truth, Madame de Maintenon would laugh if she knew the details of my charge. Tell her, I beg, that it is I who have the honour of taking the King of Spain's dressing-gown when he goes to bed, and of giving him that and his slippers when he rises. That, however, I could make light of; but really it seems too absurd that every evening, when the King comes to the Queen's bedchamber, the Conde de Benavente should hand me the King's sword, and a bottle and a lamp, which I ordinarily upset on my dress." Indeed, among the other strange fashions of royal etiquette in Spain, there was one which provided that the King, when he went to visit the Queen at night, could go in a cloak armed with sword and buckler, and carrying a bottle. The *camerera mayor* had, moreover, to wake the King in the morning, and sometimes "he is so kind," wrote the Princess, "that he often sends for me two hours at least before I want to rise." All know of the rigours of old palace Spanish etiquette, which allowed kings to be roasted if the proper officer was not at hand to remove the brazier, and queens to be dragged by the stirrup to death by rearing horses, rather than permit them to be touched by a profane hand. Some of the incidents given by the Princess of the jealousy and rivalry of the great grandees on matters of etiquette are truly comic. Thus we have the venerable Patriarch of the Indies, who, however, the Princess says, looked liked an ape, taking a napkin surreptitiously into church with him, and rushing at the most solemn moment of the sacrament before the King and Queen, and producing his cloth from his pocket for their use, because he found that it had been arranged that the *camerera mayor* should take his place at the cere-

mony. Another scene described in her letter is, if possible, still more amusing: thus we have the Conde de Priego and the Duque de Osuna fighting at the foot of the altar for the honour of moving his majesty's chair up to his *prie-dieu*. Both noblemen were very small, but the Duque de Osuna carried the day; and yet there was a moment, writes the Princess, when she thought the Duke, who was no bigger than a rat, would tumble beneath the chair, and fall upon the King at his *prie-dieu*, who would infallibly, if he had been knocked over, have fallen upon the Queen.

The influence of the strong mind of the Princesse des Ursins upon the youthful King and Queen of Spain became soon to be felt even in matters of government.

The state of ruin, hunger, and desolation of Spain at the time of the accession of the first Bourbon prince was something appalling. There are no records in history which present such a picture of beggared pride and misery and decay. The giant form which had once overawed the world had become a ragged scarecrow—an object of mockery and scorn. Charles II., the last king of the house of Austria, was a beggar and a pauper among monarchs. He was unable at times to find food for the table of the gentlemen of his bedchamber, and even oats and straw for his horses. He went on begging expeditions from town to town to ask for money, and generally in vain. The once-dreaded legions of Spain were reduced down to a miserable, starved, ragged remnant of unpaid boys and old men, numbering about fifteen thousand, officered by *hidalgos*, who begged in the streets of Flanders and in the ports of Spain. The dockyards which sent forth the invincible Armada had not a ship on the stocks. The art of shipbuilding was forgotten, and a few wretched men-of-war lay rotting in the harbours.

Whole provinces had become denuded of towns and villages; the most fertile districts of Spain had become a desert; commerce and industry and agriculture were despised alike by all classes, and were in fact non-existent.

Nearly all the needs of Spain—its clothes and its very bread—were produced by foreign workmen. Each Spaniard desired, without income, to live like a nobleman. The population decreased yearly. People ceased to marry, or entered into monasteries and convents; and priests and monks owned, it was supposed, about a third part of the soil of Spain.

It was not then a misfortune for Spain to exchange the effete Austrian dynasty for the race of the Bourbons, under whose rule France had risen almost in the same proportion as Spain had fallen, which had adopted more humane principles of toleration and more enlightened ideas of political economy. Yet the difficulty of reconciling the Spaniards to any reforms or system of government imported from the institutions of their ancient enemies, to be carried out by the French counsellors of Philip V., was necessarily very great. The hatred of the *gavachos*, as the French have been called in Spain from time immemorial, was intense.

Hence it was that the influence of the Princesse des Ursins was so salutary. She was only ostensibly occupying the post of *camerera mayor* without any acknowledged mission from the Court of Versailles, and yet she was thoroughly acquainted with its policy and in constant correspondence with Torcy, the French Minister, and with Madame de Maintenon and the Maréchal de Noailles. On excellent terms at first with Portocarrero, who at the beginning of the reign of Philip V. was all-powerful, she had by far better opportunities of bringing about harmonious relations between the governments of France and

Spain than the French ambassador himself, while her previous residence in Spain had made her well acquainted with the usages and necessities of the country.

The task, however, was no easy one of getting the Spaniards, on the one side, to accept the government of a French King, assisted by French ministers, and of co-operating with the policy of Versailles on the other, so as to satisfy the exacting supervision which Louis XIV. and his ministers exercised over Spanish affairs; for although Louis XIV. had given his grandson the advice not to surround himself with French ministers, and to respect all Spanish national feeling, yet this was but with the view of rendering the Spaniard more easily manageable for the purposes of his own ambition, and the maintenance of complete harmony between the two governments was indispensable in the war of the Spanish Succession.

It was no wonder, moreover, that a Queen of Spain should give herself wholly up to an adviser and companion like the Princesse des Ursins, for the monotony and isolation of palace life, guarded about by the inviolable prescriptions of Spanish etiquette, was something frightful. According to Spanish notions, the life of a Spanish queen should partake of the seclusion of the harem and the convent. She saw no society but those of her regular attendants. A tyrannical *camerera mayor* might, if she chose, be intolerable. She might, as did the *camerera mayor* of the first queen of Charles II., prevent her from looking out of window. The stern gloom and rigidity with which *camereras mayores* had exercised their authority were habitual, and some of the former French queens of Spain had died of the terrible monotony of their prison life. It was, then, a great boon for the wife of Philip V. to be allowed the unprecedented luxury of a Frenchwoman for a *camerera mayor*, whose

liveliness of nature, whose intellectual qualities, whose education, whose liberality in the matter of etiquette, and whose bright and good looks even at sixty-six made her an entertaining companion as well as a good adviser. The former Spanish queens had been condemned for amusement to insupportably childish games, something like spills, with their husbands, and to badly-acted Spanish plays. The Princesse des Ursins endeavoured to lighten the heavy atmosphere of the Spanish Court by getting up theatrical amusements, in which Corneille and Molière replaced Calderon and Lopez de la Vega; and by concerts in which the music of the Italian masters, just then beginning to become fashionable in Europe, was first heard in the capital of Spain, in the palace of *Buen Retiro*. The young King and Queen were grateful for the vivacity and variety which she thus ingeniously and incessantly introduced into a life which both regarded as a kind of exile; and, moreover, the very domestic nature of her charge gave her an opportunity of tutoring the young Queen in such fashion that Philip V., who was perhaps the most uxorious monarch who ever reigned, was completely at the disposal of his wife.

The duties of her position naturally gave the Princess a right of advising on the manners, dress, and habits of the King and Queen; she extended this to matters of high policy, and invariably gave advice calculated to conciliate the Spanish nation towards the new dynasty. She advised the use of the Spanish language exclusively at Court, the performance by the Queen of the customary pilgrimages to the shrine of our Lady of Atocha, and other sacred places; the adoption by Philip V. of the Spanish costume, and especially of the stiff unsightly *golilla*, or Spanish ruff, to which the nobility were especially attached; the royal attendance at bull-fights, and the practice of the national

juego de canas ; at the same time she strongly dissuaded the monarch from attending at those human sacrifices, the *autos da fe*, one of which was always prepared in honour of every new accession and every royal marriage. And the young Bourbon King was the first monarch who ventured thus to discountenance the practice of those rites of Moloch.

Madame des Ursins, indeed, did not hesitate to grapple at once with the Inquisition immediately on her arrival in Spain, and her success in delivering Aguilar Diaz, the confessor of the late King, from its dungeons, after a struggle of four years, created a new power in the country. Her influence became so manifest at last, that the French ministers and Court attendants, including the Jesuit confessor who accompanied Philip V. to Madrid, all grew jealous of the great influence of the *camerera mayor* over the royal councils. The French ambassador in 1703, the Cardinal d'Estrées, especially had made himself remarkable by his hostility to Madame des Ursins, and a struggle for dominion took place between them. Louis XIV., who was the arbiter of their differences in the close watch which he kept upon the affairs of Spain, decided at first in favour of his ambassador, and determined on recalling the *camerera mayor*. He changed his determination on account of the urgent entreaties of the Queen, who supplicated, that if Madame des Ursins was recalled, the Cardinal and his nephew, the Abbé d'Estrées, should serve him as secre-

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likely to be worsted in the conflict, remained as ambassador; and the triumph of Madame des Ursins was completed by the recall of the Jesuit confessor, and nearly every French minister or attendant possessed of any authority in Spain. However, the Abbé d'Estrees, as ambassador, was unable to reconcile himself to the part he had undertaken, and while professing outwardly complete submission to the superiority of the *camerera mayor*, treacherously wrote a despatch to the French minister, full of bitterness and insinuation against his rival. He had offered himself to submit every despatch to the perusal of Madame des Ursins before sending it away, but this one despatch he endeavoured to send surreptitiously by the ordinary courier, who not seeing upon it the accustomed mark of the Princess des Ursins, as a sign of her acquaintance with the contents, carried the despatch to the *camerera mayor*. With her usual audacity Madame des Ursins wrote indignant marginal notes, and one of them of a most singular character.

She had an equerry, named d'Aubigny, called *un tout petit sire* by St Simon, who played a sort of nondescript rôle among her attendants. He had immense share in her confidence, and it was complained that he was the only man who slept in the palace. Indeed, his apartment formed part of the suite of the Princess's own. In the despatch of the Abbé d'Estrées, mention was made of d'Aubigny, and it was stated that people had no doubt that he was married to her. "*Oh, pour mariée, non !*" wrote the Princess in all the indignation of a *grande dame*, as a marginal note.

The opening of this despatch and the marginal note came to the knowledge of Louis XIV., and his anger was great. However, by the aid of her friends at Versailles, the *Camerera* got over this difficulty, and the Abbé d'Estrées in disgust followed his uncle, and gave up

his post. But, nevertheless, shortly afterwards another subject of disagreement came between the Court of Versailles and that of Madrid, on the subject of the command of the war in Spain. The King insisted that Philip V. should shake off what he styled the shameful sloth of the palace, and put himself at the head of his armies. Madame des Ursins and the Queen both, however, set themselves against this advice of Louis XIV. The opposition of Madame des Ursins was not unknown at the Court of Versailles. The Cardinal d'Estrées, eager for revenge, beset all her friends with his representations, till, one by one, Torcy, Madame de Noailles (whose son-in-law, the Duc de Grammont, arrived at the Embassy of Madrid), and even Madame de Maintenon, ceased to defend her, and she was recalled.

She was recalled, however, only to be sent back again with greater authority than before. Her disgrace was the way to her triumph. In fact, the affairs of Spain during her absence went from bad to worse. The King, after a brief effort at independence, had made his incapacity more apparent. Montellano, with the *grandees* in the *Despacho*, attempted to absorb the whole sovereign power, to oppose every French project, to prevent the formation of an army, and to prevent the King from being master of it. The great defeat of Blenheim came to throw into still greater disfavour the French alliance in Spain; and, to add to the difficulties of Louis XIV., the chief *grandees* began to be of opinion that the only hope of saving the integrity of the Spanish monarchy was to range Spain on the side of the allies, and against the monarch of France. The Queen of Spain, aware of the danger of their position, wrote day by day the most urgent letters of appeal to Madame de Maintenon for the return of her *camerera mayor*.

Louis XIV. consented at last to send back the indispensable *came-*

rera mayor, but he did so with great repugnance. He who in early life had engaged with Colbert to deliver himself of any woman in twenty-four hours, as soon as he should be told that she influenced his politics, felt contempt and pity for his weak-minded grandson, who was incapable of the slightest initiative, and was a mere cypher without his wife, who herself was nothing without her lady of the palace. Of his intense desire to get rid of Madame des Ursins altogether, and to efface the traces of her influence in Spain, evidence is extant, in the pseudonymous correspondence which he carried on with his ambassador, the Duke of Grammont; yet he became convinced at last that Madame des Ursins was the only person capable of reconciling the discordant elements of which the Council of Madrid was composed.

Having resolved, therefore, that she should return to Spain, his policy naturally was that she should return with all the consideration and *prestige* which royal favour could bestow upon her; and Louis XIV. accordingly went through his part with a grand resignation which concealed all the sadness which must have been at the bottom of his heart.

A courier was accordingly despatched to Toulouse, where Madame des Ursins was residing, with permission for her to appear at Versailles.

"Nothing," says St Simon, "could equal the air of triumph which Madame des Ursins assumed at Marly (at a ball), or the attention of the King to distinguish her and do her honour and everything; it was as if she were a small Queen of England in the very freshness of arrival. Nothing could equal the majestic fashion with which everything was received by the Princess. She bore herself with a mixture of grace and politeness long since effaced, and which recalled the memory of the oldest times of the queen-mother.

"The King was admirable in giving a value to everything, and in making valuable what in itself had no value at all. Madame de Maintenon and Madame

la Duchesse de Bourgogne were only occupied with Madame des Ursins, who made more remarkable the prodigious flight she had taken by a little dog which she carried under her arm than by any political distinction. No one could recover from the surprise at such a familiarity which Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne herself would not have permitted herself—trifles have such importance when they are beyond example. *The King at the end of one of these balls caressed the little spaniel!!!* which was another subject of surprise for the spectators. Since that time Madame des Ursins was never to be seen at the Chateau of Marly without this little spaniel under the arm, which became for her the last mark of favour and distinction."

Madame des Ursins not only went back to Spain, but she went back with conditions drawn up by her in the form of a regular treaty, and accepted by the King; and she, moreover, named herself a new French ambassador, Amelot, in the place of the Duc de Grammont, and Orry, whose talents as an administrator and financier of the school of Colbert had obtained for him a previous mission to Spain, was also said to give her assistance.

The nine years, from 1705 to 1714, which followed, were the most important of Madame des Ursins's existence. Had it not been for this French *camerera mayor*, Louis XIV. would have abandoned his grandson to the mercy of the Allies. Spain, under the direction of Madame des Ursins, rose from the lowest state of prostration and abasement. The country which formed one of the main causes of the ruin of Napoleon, became, and through her alone for a time, the single theatre where the glory of Louis XIV. was not overwhelmed with disaster. Almanza and Villaviciosa came in to balance the evil fortune of Ramilies, Oudenarde, and Malplaquet. The victory of Almanza in 1707, which consecrated by a brilliant victory the regal power of Philip V. in Spain, had been in great part prepared by the careful administration and great reforms of the Princesse des Ursins.

Four years before Almanza, Amelot wrote in one of his despatches, that Philip V. had neither troops, nor arms, nor artillery; his domestics were not paid, and his body-guard, dying of hunger, went to eat the scraps which were distributed at the gates of the convents. Even the previous year, the failure of the siege of Barcelona, then in the hands of the Allies, Philip V., with his Queen at Burgos, and Madrid occupied by his rival, was as little the King of Spain as was Charles VII. of France at Bourges. Berwick had declared that all was lost in Estremadura and Castille, and that nothing remained for the King but to fly to the mountains of the north of Spain, to be as near as possible to the frontier of France. Three parts of Spain were in possession of the Austrian prince who claimed the succession of Charles II. The great mass of the *grandees* deserted to the side of the Archduke, who was proclaimed in Madrid under the title of Charles III. Even the Cardinal Portocarrero, the founder of the Bourbon dynasty in Spain, obeyed the dictates of resentment at the disgrace into which he had fallen, embraced openly the cause of the rival of Philip V., and opened the gates of Toledo to his enemies. He illuminated his palace, had the *Te Deum* sung in the cathedral, gave a splendid banquet to the officers of the army of the Allies, at which they drank to the health of Charles III., King of Spain, and gave a public benediction to the standards of the Austrian pretender. But the cause of Philip V. had been embraced by the people in the capital. The populace made use of every hostile device, some of them of unparalleled strangeness, for the destruction and discomfort of his enemies, and peasants in the country came in bodies to the King supplicating delivery from the yoke of the *grandees* who overrode them with exactions. The great mass of the people of Spain remained faithful to the adopted heir of their last sovereign.

Madame des Ursins took admirable advantage of this popular enthusiasm. By her addresses, by her letters, and by the applications she directed, she obtained voluntary gifts for the support of the army of the King; 8000 *pistoles* from the province of Burgos, from another province 15,000, and much greater contributions from the richest cities of Andalusia. Money and bread and clothes arrived in abundance at the camp of Berwick, and the King of Spain had a satisfaction long unknown to any monarch in the country, that of having his troops well paid and fed. He was transported with this wonderful good fortune, and immediately wrote a letter of the warmest thanks and acknowledgments for the devotion of the lady who had procured such an unexpected result in the darkest hour of his peril. One of her letters from Burgos to Madame de Maintenon at this time gave a lively idea of the straits to which the royal family was driven, and of the life of Madame des Ursins.

"I will give you the description of my apartment to amuse you. It consists of a single piece, which is not more than twelve feet wide in any direction. A large window, which does not shut, exposed to the south, occupies all one side. A door, very low, serves me for a passage into the chamber of the Queen, and the door leads to a windy passage where I do not venture to go, although two or three lamps are always burning there, for it is so badly paved that I might break my neck. I cannot say the walls are white, for they are very dirty. My travelling-bed, with a camp-stool and a deal table, is the only furniture I have, which last serves me as a writing-table and for eating the remains of the Queen's dinner—for I have neither kitchen nor money to provide me. I laugh at all that."

Nevertheless, after the battle of Almanza, the fortunes of Philip V., temporarily upraised by a brilliant victory, seemed to have fallen lower than before, and the energy of Madame des Ursins alone saved the Spanish monarchy from dismem-

berment, and Philip from being a realmless monarch.

In 1709, Louis XIV. was so hard pressed by the Allies, and France so exhausted, that the Court of Versailles seriously contemplated the abandonment of his grandson. Philip V. himself prepared to resign himself to his fate. It was then that all the spirit of this extraordinary and intelligent woman, now seventy-four years of age, was aroused. "What, sire!" said she to Philip V., "are you a prince? are you a man—you who treat your royal title so lightly and have feelings weaker than a woman?" Not only did she renew again all her efforts for the recruiting, discipline, and support of the Spanish army, but she threw herself thoroughly into the state of French affairs,—wrote eloquent and indignant letters to Madame de Maintenon, and propounded a scheme for utilising anew the resources of France and filling afresh the exhausted treasury for the purposes of the war; and when we add to all the political difficulties with which she was daily struggling, the illness of the Queen after confinement of a second son, and upon whom, as *camerera mayor*, she was obliged to be in constant attendance, it must be imagined that more anxieties and cares never fell to the lot of a septuagenarian lady.

This stroke of policy of hers at this period was of surprising audacity, and worthy of the spirit which dictated the letters characterised by Madame de Maintenon as "*lettres à feu et à sang*." The Spanish people were so indignant at what they considered the treachery of the French King in contemplating the abandonment of his grandson, that the old international hatred between the two nations was awakened. The French residents in Madrid were in danger of their lives. In this state of things, Madame des Ursins ventured on the most daring act of her life. She extracted from the King a decree which banished

all the French from Spain, and thus threw the new monarchy on the undivided sympathies of the Spanish people. This stroke of policy of Madame des Ursins had the happiest effect in reconciling the grandees of Spain to the Bourbon dynasty. The Princess was carrying on two great struggles at the same time—one against the supporters of the Archduke, and the other against the grandees, who, like all aristocracies, seized the opportunity, when the monarchy was in this struggling condition, to aggrandise their privileges and pretensions. The Spanish nobility were now ambitious of recovering some of their feudal privileges, which they had lost under Charles V. and Philip II. From the beginning of her administration she had opposed resolutely the pretensions and unveiled the intrigues of some and punished the treachery of others of the grandees. Having discovered the high treason of the *amirante* of Castille, she had him prosecuted and condemned to death, which caused the Duke of Medina Celi to exclaim, "People like ourselves ought not to be treated thus!" But the Duke of Medina Celi himself, having conspired with the Duke of Orleans, and having as Minister of Foreign Affairs betrayed a trust reposed in him, was also arrested, and died in a state prison; and the Marquis de Leganez, another great noble, was also sent into captivity to France.

In fact, in almost every matter of internal policy Madame des Ursins followed the example of statesmanship in France, where not only the repression of oligarchical power, but the centralisation and amplification of the administration, had been the aim of every French Government from Philip Augustus to Richelieu and Louis XIV. Thus after Almanza she ventured resolutely on a *coup d'état*, which put an end to the administrative and legislative chaos of Spain, where, up to that time, every province had its own *fueros* and *cortes*,

and Catalans and Arragonese had been as jealous of Castilians as though they had been of different nations. But this daring lady was not content with having to grapple with the Archduke and his allies, with the great mass of the grandees, and with the thousandfold abuses of Spanish administration and justice; she dared to make assault even on the Inquisition, and to establish in Spain for the Spanish Church that independence which the Gallican Church had acquired in France;—a proceeding, however, which was discouraged by Louis XIV., who wrote to his grandson, "Croyez-moi, vous n'êtes pas assez fort pour avoir encore vos libertés gallicanes."

The greatest proof of the excellence of the administration of Madame des Ursins was the devotion which the people of Spain showed towards the cause of Philip V., and the final reconciliation of the grandees to his government. When the Archduke, after his victory at Saragossa, had opened again the way to Madrid, and Philip V. had again taken his Court to the north to Valladolid, although the fugitive King had given permission to all the inhabitants to remain in the capital, yet all citizens who were able deserted the city for Valladolid. Even shopkeepers and artisans followed the general example; and some poor, and some even infirm, officers of justice made the journey to Valladolid on foot. All houses and shops and workshops were shut up. The capital seemed a desert; and when the allied troops entered the city, and the Archduke Charles went, at the head of two thousand horsemen, to return thanks to *Nuestra Señora de Atocha*, only some ragged boys, in the hopes of getting a few *maravedís*, cried *Viva el Rey Carlos!*

The grandees themselves, in their stately pride, were touched by the enthusiasm of the people, and came over in a body to the King; a change of feeling, manifested by a

letter to Louis XIV., signed by all the leading nobles, declaring their fidelity to his grandson, describing the pressing need of his cause for fresh assistance, and asking for French co-operation.

This application was the proposition of the Duke of Medina Sidonia, and was signed by the Dukes del' Infantado, Popoli, d' Arcos, d' Abantes, de Bagneo, de Veraguas, de Montellano de Bejar, the Condestable of Castille, the Marquises de Almonacid and del Carpio, the Condes de Lernos and Peñaranda, and a crowd of others of the greatest names of Spain; only the great Duke d' Osuna, he who was "no bigger than a rat," always faithful to Philip V., refused to sign, from true motives of Castilian pride: he was haughtily discontented with Louis XIV., that he should have thought of abandoning his grandson and Spain, and said Spain would suffice for the work herself.

The joy of Louis XIV. at this letter was immense. He read it several times, and agreed to send to the assistance of his grandson 14,000 men. The great Vendome, the grandson of Henri IV. and Gabrielle d' Estrees, was sent as general; and, on the 10th of December 1710, the united Spanish and French army, with Vendome as general-in-chief, gained the great victory of Villaviciosa, which established the Bourbon dynasty securely. The nobles of Spain, fired with their new fidelity, and jealous of distinction under the eyes of the famous French general, fought with brilliant valour, and thousands of standards were taken, of which the French marshal made a couch for the first Bourbon king of Spain on the night of the victory. After ten years of struggle and persecution, the standard of the *fleur-de-lis* was firmly planted in Spain.

Madame des Ursins, to whom so large a portion of that success must be attributed, was herself already a grandee of Spain. She

now received, in company with the Duke de Vendome, the title of Her Highness, and the order of the Golden Fleece, with a promise of a sovereign principality in the Low Countries.

In the year 1711 everything turned to the advantage of Philip V.: the Archduke, his rival, was elected Emperor. His allies were not inclined to confer upon Austria that aggrandisement which they had refused to France, and to create another empire like that of Charles V.; they consequently refused to make further efforts in his behalf. Marlborough, whose scientific blows had nearly laid helpless the French monarchy, fell into disgrace, and was recalled; and in 1712, the French, under Villars, were enabled to win the battle of Denain, and to lay down the basis of the Peace of Utrecht.

Madame des Ursins, however, though her great work was achieved still remained in Spain, directing reforms, administrative and financial, of the Colbert character, with the aid of the industrious Orry, and fighting with the Inquisition. Nevertheless the Inquisition was still too strong for her; for, says Llorente, 1574 persons were burnt in the reign of Philip V., and 11,750 subjected to penitential punishment. But the power of the Church in Spain was enormous. "The abuses of the clergy," wrote Macanaz, a jurist employed by Madame des Ursins to fight her battles, and made by her a member of the *Despacho* , "have weakened the royal power. The ecclesiastic immunities only serve to favour usurpation and disorder. The churches are become the refuges of criminals, and the right of asylum has been extended from these sacred edifices to adjoining houses, to shops, and whole neighbouring quarters. The ecclesiastics, the monks and the nuns, encroach yearly on the rights of the King by continual acquisition of secular property, which forthwith becomes exempt from taxa-

tion. The clergy have in the State more subjects than the King. The ambition of some ministers has tolerated these abuses to give them the opportunity of enriching their families with the goods of the Church." Dangerous words these in the days of the Inquisition, when its name made men's blood still run cold with terror, and its power was sufficient to lodge the greatest grandee in its dungeons. The documents in which it was spoken of were consequently kept profoundly secret; and the very Council of Castille first resolved to adopt the precaution, in their proceedings against the Inquisition, of *voting by ballot*. The Inquisitors, it was argued, could not seize on the whole Council at once; yet even then the Council was afraid. The Inquisitors, working on the religious prejudices of the people, got up a popular commotion at Madrid; and Philip V. himself, and all his Council, were too terrified at the awful power they were confronting to follow the energetic advice of Madame des Ursins and Orry, and abolish it. So the Inquisition still remained unshorn of much of its terrible power; yet the struggle of Madame des Ursins with it was not wholly fruitless. She had found a vigorous and firm ally in England, who, since the Peace of Utrecht, had maintained an ambassador in Madrid; and it was decreed that the palace of the English ambassador, and every English ship in a Spanish harbour, should be exempt from the power of the Inquisition. The British flag and the British nationality, owing to Madame des Ursins, alone braved the Inquisition in the soil of Spain, and offered protection to every victim.

But the reign, as it may be called, of the Princess was drawing to an end. Her young protectress and friend, the Queen of Spain, who joined to the affection of a daughter the deepest respect for her great intelligence, died at the age of

twenty-five in 1714. The heroic Marie Louise, who had given a soul to her weak-minded husband—who had been a wanderer with him in his rapid and forced flight amidst the rugged mountains of the Asturias, where she had often to be content with the bed and fare of a peasant and a mountaineer, worn out with ten years of difficulty, and sometimes of privation, during which she was subject to the moral distress of seeing her own father, the faithless Duke of Savoy, ranged among her enemies—was no more, and Madame des Ursins was left alone with Philip V.

The position of Madame des Ursins was now necessarily extremely delicate; and in the ten months which intervened between the death of Marie Louise and the second final disgrace of the Princess, her conduct was not of a nature to disarm jealousy and to avert the venomous force of scandal. She should have exercised greater precaution, since she well knew that she was detested by the priests, and that the grandees and ministers of the Spanish Court were not attached to her, but only tolerated the ascendancy of this audacious French old lady, who was satisfied with nothing in Spain, who carried her reforming mania into everything, and had even violated the most inviolable rules of Court etiquette. Louis XIV., who detested all meddling of women in politics, moreover, had also only tolerated her as being for a time indispensable, and had been highly indignant that Philip V., out of gratitude to the Princess, had supported, with the allies, her claims to a sovereign principality in Flanders, in return for her services, with such pertinacity, that he delayed the signing of the Peace of Utrecht. Madame des Ursins, however, in all the pride of her conscious superiority, continued governing Spain with a high hand. She exiled one of her chief ministers from motives of personal discontent—she imprisoned two of the greatest grandees—

broke with all whom she considered her enemies, or even lukewarm friends—set the Duke of Berwick, who was sent to a military command in Spain, at defiance—and treated even Madame de Maintenon with haughtiness.

Being now close upon eighty, and Philip V. only thirty-two, she may have imagined scandal could make nothing of their relations, and she kept the King in leading-strings, and hardly let him out of her sight. At the palace of the Duke of Medina Celi, to which she transferred the King from the Buen Retiro after the death of his queen, she had a corridor made between the monarch's apartments and her own. This corridor gave rise to immense scandal in Madrid. Yet Madame des Ursins, it must be remembered, was not only chief political adviser of the King, but the governess of his children, who lived in her apartments; and the constant society of the young princes was the chief consolation of Philip V. for the loss of Marie Louise.

Nevertheless the evil tongues of Madrid made much of the corridor. The Jesuit confessor of Philip one day during an interview confided to him that, both in France and Spain, people thought he meant to marry her. "*Moi l'épouser !*" replied the King; "*oh ! pour cela, non !*" Fatigued at last, however, he said to Madame des Ursins, "*Cherchez-moi une femme ; nos têtes-à-têtes scandalisent le peuple.*"

There was at this time at Madrid, in the service of the legation of the Duke of Parma, an intriguing, restless, ambitious Italian priest, Alberoni by name, who had been brought originally to Spain by the Duke of Vendôme. He was himself a Parmesan by birth, and the son of a gardener. The great rôle which Madame des Ursins played in Spanish affairs stimulated his ambition, and he was destined to outdo her and to take her place. He saw the part which a foreigner

might play in Spanish politics. He allied himself at first with the Grand Inquisitor, the Cardinal del Guidice, and offered his services secretly to defend the Inquisition against the assaults of the *camerera mayor*. Then the wily Italian broke apparently with Del Guidice, and paid his court to Madame des Ursins.

The Princess of Parma happened to be among the number of princesses who were considered as eligible for marriage with the Spanish king. She was, as her subsequent history proved, one of the most intractable, imperious, and domineering of ladies—a royal virago. Madame des Ursins was naturally anxious that the new queen should be of a precisely opposite character. Alberoni, from being at the Court of Parma, was acquainted with the character of the princess, and on being personally consulted by Madame des Ursins as to the character of the Princess of Parma, assured her that the princess was one of the most docile of creatures, and that she would have no difficulty in establishing an empire as complete over her as she had held over the late Queen of Spain.

Madame des Ursins was ravished at this false account of the Princess of Parma, and despatched Alberoni forthwith to negotiate the marriage. Some expressions, however, of the satisfaction of her enemies at the step she had taken reached her. After further inquiry she became aware that Alberoni had deceived her, and she endeavoured to stop the marriage by sending a courier. The courier arrived at Parma a day or two before the marriage. The Court of Parma got wind of his errand, and had him seized and threatened with death if he divulged a word of his mission. Madame des Ursins set forth from Madrid to meet the new queen as *camerera mayor*. One of the last acts of this remarkable woman before she went to encounter the fiery young princess who was

to annihilate her political existence, was the establishment of an academy at Madrid, framed after the model of the *Académie Française*. She had some warnings of the fate which awaited her; but she despised all. Everything, however, had been arranged for her overthrow. The King himself had, with consummate cowardice and treachery, and with palpitating uxoriousness, sent his wife full powers. Everything had been arranged by a conspiracy of the King and his bride, and the Inquisition, and the old aristocracy of Spain, for dismissing into instantaneous exile an aged lady who had laboured unceasingly for fifteen years in the desperate cause of the Spanish monarchy. The Queen-Dowager, the widow of Charles II., an aunt of Elizabeth Farnese, had an interview with the new queen at Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, as she approached Spain. The Queen-Dowager was not only a personal enemy of Madame des Ursins, but she had been thoroughly tutored by the Grand Inquisitor, Del Guidice, who was residing like herself at Bayonne, as to the advice she should tender to the Queen. *Aberoni* saw the latter alone at *Pampeluna*, and with consummate art roused the fury of the young virago to an unnecessary pitch of exasperation.

Madame des Ursins, as *camerera mayor*, had organised the Queen's household. It was arranged that the royal marriage should take place at *Guadalaxara*. She had a last interview alone with the King at that place, on the 22d of December, and advanced to meet the bride at *Quadraque*, a small village seven leagues further on. The Princesse des Ursins had not the slightest notion of what was awaiting her—even the cruel brow and scorn of the vixenish young Elizabeth Farnese as she received her obeisance were insufficient to prepare her for what was to come. There are various accounts of what

took place; but the most trustworthy report relates that when left alone with Elizabeth Farnese, the latter burst forth in a torrent of reproach on the whole of her administration, accused her of the death or exile of all the great grandees who had been her enemies, and finally, lashing herself into fury, screamed for Don Antonio Amazaga, the officer of the body-guard, and told him "to put that mad woman out of her room"—to arrest her, and not to leave her till he had put her into a carriage. She then called for the groom of the royal equipages, and ordered him to get ready a carriage and to take the Princesse des Ursins off at once to Bayonne by Burgos. Amazaga represented that the King of Spain alone had the power to give such orders. She demanded with haughtiness if he had not orders from the King to obey her in everything; and Philip had indeed had the ingratitude and cowardice to give such orders, knowing full well what was intended.

A strange but a veritable object for commiseration was now the Princesse des Ursins. It was night, the eve but one before Christmas, and bitterly cold as it is only cold in central Spain and Siberia when the earth is covered with ice and snow. The driver of the Princess lost a hand with frost-bite before morning. Nevertheless Madame des Ursins, in her eightieth year, with her grey hairs, in her grand Court dress, was bundled into a carriage and started without a change of raiment, without being allowed to alter her cumbersome head-dress, without money, and without a single means of protection against the cold. Never was disgrace in the world more unforeseen, and hardly ever more undeserved. What must not the towering pride of the high-born lady, with her quick and vast intelligence, have suffered in that long and terrible Siberian ride, deprived as she was of every necessary! This was the end of the

service of kings,—to be rolled off at a minute's notice through a night of arctic severity, seated between two body-guards, without a mantle to wrap round her, and without a vestige of food or a single restorative. What emotions must have passed through the brain of this extraordinary woman during that bitter night! We may imagine, but cannot know; for she never spoke a word to either of her guards till the morning, when they stopped to refresh the horses. And so across Spain — across desert, hotelless Spain, where at that time neither bed nor food was to be had beyond such as were fit for muleteers—travelled the Princess. Her resignation was astonishing: her guards remembered it with admiration to their dying days. This dreadful journey lasted three weeks—three weeks of every kind of privation—till she reached Saint-Jean-de-Luz, on the 14th of January; and yet not a tear, not a single regret, not a single complaint at all the hardships and suffering she underwent, or at the ingratitude and rigour of the King or his new Queen, escaped her.

Such was her exit from Spain, which she had entered ten years before in triumph and in the full blaze of summer, when every town on the road from Madrid to Burgos was full of spectators assembled from the capital, and indeed from all parts of the country, to clap their hands, to wave *sombreros*, and to shout her a welcome back to Spain,—when the King and Queen themselves advanced two leagues from the capital to meet her and embrace her with affection.

What need to relate the subsequent neglect she met with from the moribund Louis XIV. and Madame de Maintenon on her arrival in France? She who had lived in royal state in Madrid, with guards in her antechamber and about her carriage, was reduced at Versailles, whither she went to have a solitary audience with the King, to lodge with the wife of a clerk of the office of foreign affairs.

She finally retired to Rome, the congenial retreat of fallen greatness, where she received immense respect from the Pope and cardinals; where, too, she received some tokens of consideration from Philip V. as atonement for the past. There she lived in intimacy with the exiled and discrowned race of Stuart; and there ultimately she came face to face with both Del Guidice and Alberoni, the authors of her disgrace, both vagrant and in exile; and there she died, with her lucid intelligence vigorous and active, in 1722, in her eighty-seventh year.

The pages of St Simon, where he describes his interviews with Madame des Ursins, are among the most curious of his *Memoirs*; and although not personally inclined towards her, on account of his relations with her enemy the Regent, who had been guilty of treasonable plots against the throne of Philip V., yet he does full justice to her courage, her powers of application, and her wonderful intelligence; and declared that "her life deserved to be written, since it would hold a place among the most curious portions of history of the time in which she lived."

JOHN.—PART VI.

CHAPTER XVII.

FOR some days after the fire, John continued in a sadly uncomfortable state both of body and mind. The two, indeed, were not dissimilar. He was much burnt, though superficially, and suffered double pangs from the stinging, gnawing, unremitting pain. His spirit was burnt too—scorched by sudden flames; stiff and sore all over, like his limbs, with points of exaggerated suffering here and there,—a thing he could not take his thoughts from, nor try to forget. He was very unmanageable by his attendants, was with difficulty persuaded to obey the doctor's prescriptions, and absolutely refused to lay himself up. "The end'll be as you'll kill yourself, sir, and that you'll see," said his landlady. "Not much matter either," John murmured between his teeth. He was smarting all over, as the poor moth is which flies into the candle. It does the same thing over again next minute, no doubt; and so, probably, would he: but in the mean time he suffered much both in body and mind. He would not keep in bed, or even in-doors, notwithstanding the doctor's orders; and it was only downright incapacity that kept him from appearing in the temporary offices which had been arranged for the business of the bank. Mr Crediton had come in from Fernwood at once to look after matters; but on that day John was really ill, and so had escaped the visit which otherwise would have been inevitable. Mr Whichelo came that evening to bring his principal's regrets. "He was very much cut up about not seeing you," said the head-clerk. "You know your own affairs best, and I don't wish to be intrusive; but I think you would

find it work better not to keep him at such a distance."

"I keep Mr Crediton at a distance!" said John, with a grimace of pain.

"You do, Mr Mitford. I don't say that he is always what he might be expected to be; but, anyhow, no advances come from your side."

"It is not from my side advances should come," John said, turning his face to the wall with an obstinacy which was almost sullen; while at the same time he said to himself at the bottom of his heart, What does it matter? These were but the merest outward details. The real question was very different. Did a woman know what love meant?—was it anything but a diversion to her—an amusement? was what he was asking himself; while a man, on the other hand, might give up his life for it, and annul himself, all for a passing smile—a smile that was quite as bright to the next comer. Such thoughts were thorns in John's pillow as he tossed and groaned. They burned and gnawed at his heart worse than his outward wounds; and there were no cool applications which could be made to them. He did not want to be spoken to, nor to have even the friendliest light thrown upon the workings of his mind. To be let alone—to be left to make the best of it—to be allowed to resume his work quietly, and go and come, and wait until the problem had been solved for him, or until he himself had solved it,—it seemed to John that he wished for nothing more.

"That may be," said Mr Whichelo; "but all the same you don't take much pains to conciliate him—though that is not my business. A man who has had a

number of us round him all his life always anxious to conciliate—as good men as himself any day,” the head-clerk added, with some heat, “but still in a measure dependent upon his will for our bread—it takes a strong head to stand such a strain, Mr Mitford. An employer is pretty near a despot, unless he’s a very good man. I don’t want to say a word against Mr Crediton—”

“It will be better not,” said John, with another revulsion of feeling, not indisposed to knock the man down who ventured to thrust in his opinion between Kate’s father and himself; and Mr Whichelo for the moment was silent, with a half-alarmed sense of having gone too far.

“He is very grateful to you for your promptitude and energy,” he continued: “but for you these papers must have been lost. It would have been my fault,” said Mr Whichelo, with animation, yet in a low tone. There was even emotion in his words, and something like a tear in his eye. If he had been a great general or a distinguished artist, his professional reputation could not have been more precious to him. But John was preoccupied, and paid no attention. He did not care for having saved Mr Whichelo’s character any more than Mr Crediton’s money, though he had, indeed, risked his life to do it. He was in such a mood that to risk his life was rather agreeable to him than otherwise, not for any “good motive,” but simply as he would have thrust his burnt leg or arm into cold water for the momentary relief of his pain.

“Don’t let us talk any more about it,” he said; “they are safe, I suppose, and there is an end of it. But how I got out of that place,” he added, turning himself once more impatiently on his uneasy bed, “is a mystery to me.”

“You have your friend to thank for that,” said his companion, with

the sense that now at last a topic had been found on which it would be safe to speak.

“My—what?” cried John, sitting suddenly upright in his bed.

“Your—friend,—the gentleman who was with you. Good God! this is the worst of all,” cried poor Whichelo, driven to his wits’ end.

And, indeed, for a minute John’s expression was that of a demon. He had some cuts on his forehead, which were covered with plaster; he was excessively pale; one of his arms was bandaged up; and when you have added to all these not beautifying circumstances the dim light thrown upon the bed under its shabby curtains, and the look of horror, dismay, and rage which passed over the unhappy young fellow’s face, poor Mr Whichelo’s consternation may be understood. “My—friend!” he repeated, with a groan. He could not himself have given any reason for it; but it seemed at the moment to be the last and finishing blow.

“Yes,” said Mr Whichelo, “so they told me. He found you lying in the passage with the engines playing upon you, and dragged you out. It was very lucky for you he was there.”

John fell back in his bed with a look of utter weariness and lassitude. “It doesn’t matter,” he said. “But is anybody such a fool as to think that I should have died with the engines playing on me? Nonsense. He need not have been so confoundedly officious: but it don’t matter, I tell you,” he added, angrily; “don’t let us speak of it any more.”

“My dear Mr Mitford,” said Mr Whichelo, “I don’t wish to interfere; but I am the father of a family myself, with grown-up sons, and I don’t like to see a young man give way to wrong feeling. The gentleman did a most friendly action. I don’t know, I am sure, if you would have died—but—he meant well, there can be no doubt of that.”

"Confound him!" said John between his closed teeth. Mr Whichelo was glad he could not quite hear what it was; perhaps, however, he expected something worse than "confound him"—for a sense of horror crept over him, and he was very thankful that he had no closer interest in this impatient young man than mere acquaintanceship—a man who was going in for the Church! he said to himself. He sat silent for a little, and then got up and took his hat.

"I hear you have to be kept very quiet," he said; "and as it is late, I will take my leave. Good evening, Mr Mitford; I hope you will have a good night; and if I can be of any use——"

"Good-night," said John, too much worn to be able to think of politeness. And when Mr Whichelo was gone the doctor came, who gave him a great deal of suffering by way of relieving him. He bore it all in silence, having plenty of distraction afforded him by his thoughts, which were bitter enough. "Doctor," he said, sitting up all at once while his injured arm was being bandaged, "answer me one question: I hear I was found lying somewhere with the engines playing on me; could I have died like that?"

"You might—in time," said the doctor, with a smile, "but not just for as long as the fire lasted; unless you had taken cold, which you don't appear to have done, better luck."

"But there was no other danger?"

"You could not have been burnt alive with the engines playing on you," said the doctor. "Yes, of course there was danger: the roof might have fallen in, which it did not—thanks, I believe, to your promptitude; or even if the partition had come down upon you, it would have been far from pleasant; but I should think you have had quite enough of it as it is."

"I want to make sure," said

the patient, with incomprehensible eagerness, "not for my own sake—but—there never was any real danger? you can tell me that."

"One can never say as much," was the answer. "I should not myself like to lie insensible in a burning house, close to a partition which fell eventually. At the least you might have been crippled and disfigured for life."

A groan burst from John's breast when he found himself alone on that weary lingering night. How long it seemed!—years almost since the excitement of the fire which had sustained him for the moment, though he was not aware of it. He put his hand up to his eyes, and found that there were tears in them, and despised himself, which added another thorn to his pillow. He had nobody to console him; nobody to keep him from brooding over the sudden misery. Was it a fit revenge of fate upon him for his feeling of right in regard to Kate? He had felt that he had a right to her because he had saved her life. Was it possible that he had taken an ungenerous advantage of that? He went back over the whole matter, and he said to himself that, had he loved a girl so much out of his sphere, without this claim upon her, he would have smothered his love, and made up his mind from the beginning that it was useless. But the sense that he had saved her life had given him a sense of power—yes, of ungenerous power—over her. And now he himself had fallen into the same subjection. Another man had saved his life; or, at least, was supposed by others, and no doubt would himself believe that he had done so. This thought scorched his heart as the flames had done his body. It caught him like a fiery breath, and shrivelled up his nerves and pulses. Fred Huntley, whom she had taken into her confidence, to whom she had described the state of the affairs between them, whose advice almost she had asked on a matter

which never should have been breathed to profane ears—Fred Huntley had saved his life. He groaned in his solitude, and put up his hand to his eyes, and despised himself. "I had better cry over it, like a sick baby," he said to himself, with savage irony; and oh to think that was all, all he could do!

Next morning John insisted on getting up in utter disobedience to his doctor. He had his arm in a sling, but what did that matter? and he had still the plaster on the cuts on his forehead. He tried to read, but that was not possible. He wrote to his mother as best he could with his left hand, telling her there had been a fire, and that he had burned his fingers pulling some papers out of it—"nothing of the least importance," he said. And when he had done that he paused and hesitated. Should he write to Kate? He had not done it for several days past. It was the longest gap that had ever occurred in their correspondence. His heart yearned a little within him notwithstanding all its wounds, and then he flung down the pen and shut himself up. Why should he write? She must have heard all about it from Fred Huntley and from her father. She had heard, no doubt, that Fred had saved his life—and she had taken no notice. Why should she take any notice? It did not humiliate a woman to be under such an obligation, but it did humiliate a man. John rose and stalked about his little room, which scarcely left him space enough for four steps from end to end. He stared out hopelessly at the window which looked into the little humble suburban street with its tiny gardens; and then he went and stared into the little glass over the mantelpiece, which was scarcely tall enough to reflect him unless he stooped. A pretty sight he was to look at; three lines of plaster on his forehead, marks of scorching on his cheek, dark lines of pain under his eyes, and the restless, anxious,

uneasy expression of extreme suffering on his scarred face. He was not an Adonis at the best, poor John, and he was conscious of it. What was there in him that she should care for him? She had been overborne by his claim of right over her. It had been ungenerous of him; he had put forth a plea which never ought to be urged, and which another man now had the right of urging over himself. With a groan of renewed anguish John threw himself down on the little sofa, and leaned his head and his folded arms on the table at which he had been writing his mother's letter. He had nothing to fall back upon: all his life and hopes he had given up for this, and here was what it had come to. He had no capability left in his mind but of despair.

It was, no doubt, because he was so absorbed in his own feelings and unconscious of what was passing, that he heard nothing of any arrival at the door. He scarcely raised his head when the door of his own little sitting-room was opened. "I want nothing, thanks," he said, turning his back on his officious landlady, he thought. She must have come into the room more officious than ever, for there was a faint rustling sound of a woman's dress, and the sense of some other persons near him; but John only turned his back the more obstinately. Then all at once there came something that breathed over him like a wind from the south, something made up of soft touch, soft sound, soft breath. "John, my poor John!" said the voice; and the touch was as of two arms going round that poor wounded head of his. It was impossible—it could not be. He suffered his hands to be drawn down from his face, his head to be encircled in the arms, and said to himself that it was a dream. "Am I mad?" he said, half aloud; "am I losing my head?—for I know it cannot be."

"What cannot be? and why

should not it be?" said Kate in his ear. "Oh, you unkind, cruel John! Did you want me to break my heart without a word or a message from you? Not even to see papa! not to send me a single line! to leave me to think you were dying or something, and you not even in bed. If I were not so glad, I should be in a dreadful passion. You horrid, cruel, brave, dear old John!"

He did not know what to think or say. All his evil thoughts slid away from him unawares, as the ice melts. There was no reason for it; but the sun had shone on them, and they were gone. He took hold of, and kept fast in his, the hands that had touched his aching head. "I do not think it is you," he said; "I am afraid to look lest it should not be you."

"I know better than that," said Kate; "it is because you will not let me see your face. Poor dear face!" cried the impulsive girl, and cried a little, and dropped a sudden, soft, momentary kiss upon the scorched cheek. That was her tribute to the solemnity of the occasion. And then she laughed half hysterically. "John, dear, you are so ugly, and I like you so," she said; and sat down by him, and clasped his arm with both her hands. John's heart had melted into the foolishness of tenderness and joy by this time. He was so happy that his very pain seemed to him the tingling of pleasure. "I cannot think it is you," he said, looking down upon her with a fondness which could find no words.

"I have come all this way to see him," she cried, "and evidently now he thinks it is not proper. Look, I have brought Parsons with me. There she is standing in the window all this time, not to intrude upon us. Do you think I am improper now?"

"Hush!" he said, softly; "don't blaspheme yourself. Because I cannot say anything except wonder to feel myself so happy——"

"My poor John, my poor dear old John!" she said, leaning the fairy head against him which ought to have had a crown of stars round it instead of a mite of a bonnet. Kate took no thought of her bonnet at that moment. She sat by his side, and talked and talked, healing his wounds with her soft words. And Parsons drew a chair quietly to her and sat down in the window, turning her back upon the pair. "Lord, if I was to behave like that," Parsons was saying to herself, "and somebody a-looking on!" And she sat and stared out of the window, and attracted a barrel-organ, which came and played before her, with a pair of keen Italian eyes gleaming at her over it from among the black elf-locks. Parsons shook her head at the performer; but her presence was enough for him, and he kept on grinding "*La Donna é Mobile*" slowly and steadily, through her thoughts and through the murmuring conversation of the other two. Neither Kate nor John paid any attention to the music. They had not heard it, they would have said; and yet it was strange how the air would return to both of them in later times.

"I see now you could not write," said Kate; "but still you have scribbled something to your mother. I think I might have had a word too. But I did not come to scold you. Oh, that horrid organ-man, I wish he would go away! You might have sent me a message by papa."

"I did not see him," said John.

"Or by Fred Huntley. You saw him, for he told me—— John! what is the matter? Are you angry? Ought I not to have come?"

Then there was a pause; he had drawn his arm away out of her clasping hands, and all at once the tingling which was like pleasure became pain again, and gnawed and burned him as if in a sudden endeavour to overcome his patience. And yet it was so difficult to look down upon the flushed wondering face,

the eyes wide open with surprise, the bewildered look, and remain unkind to her. For it was unkind to pull away the arm which she was clasping with both her hands. He felt himself a barbarian, and yet he could not help it. Huntley's name was like a shot in the heart to him. And the organ went on with its creaks and jerks, playing out its air. "That organ is enough to drive one wild," he said, pettishly, and felt that he had committed himself and was to blame.

"Is it only the organ?" said Kate, relieved. "Yes, is it not dreadful? but I thought you were angry with me. Oh, John, I don't think I could bear it if I thought you were really angry with me."

"My darling! I am a brute," he said, and put the arm which he had drawn so suddenly away round her. He had but one—the other was enveloped in bandages and supported in a sling.

"Does it hurt?" said Kate, laying soft fingers full of healing upon it. "I do so want to hear how it all happened. Tell me how it was. They say the bank might all have been burned down if you had not seen it, and papa would have lost such heaps of money. John, dear, I think you will find papa easier to manage now."

"Do you think so?" he said, with a faint smile; "but that is buying his favour, Kate."

"Never mind how we get it, if we do get it," cried Kate. "I am sure I would do anything to buy his favour—but I cannot go and save his papers and do such things for him. Or, John, was it for me?" she said, lowering her voice, and looking up in his face.

"No, I don't think it was for you," he answered, rather hoarsely; "and it was not for him. I did it because I could not help it, and to escape from myself."

"To escape from yourself! Why did you want that?" she said, with an innocent little cry of astonishment. It was clear she was quite

unaware of having done him any wrong.

"Kate, Kate," he said, holding her close, "you did not mean it; but why did you take Fred Huntley into your confidence—why did you speak to him about you and me?"

She gave him a wondering look, and then the colour rose into her cheek. "John!" she said, in a tone of amazement, "what is this about Fred Huntley? Are you jealous of him—jealous of *him*? Oh, I hope I am not quite so foolish as that."

Was that all she was going to say? No disclaimer of having given him her confidence, nothing about her part in the matter, only about his. Was he jealous? the question sank into John's heart like a stone.

"I don't know if I am jealous," he said, with a falter in his voice, which went to Kate's impressionable heart. "It must be worse to me than it is to you, or you would not ask me. To have said anything to anybody about us, Kate!"

"I see," she said, holding away from him a little; "I see,"—and was silent for two seconds at least, which felt like two hours to them both. And the man went on playing "*La Donna é Mobile*,"—and Parsons, very red in the face, kept shaking her head at him, but did not attempt to leave her post. Then Kate turned and lifted her pretty eyes, full of tears, to her lover's face, and spoke in his very ear. "John, it was very silly of me, and thoughtless, and nasty, I see. But I have had nobody to tell me such things. I have never had a mother like you; I say whatever comes into my head. John! I am so sorry——"

Could he have let her say any more? he ended the sweet confession as lovers use; he held her to him, and healed himself by her touch, by her breath, by the softness of her caressing hands. He forgot everything in the world but that she was there. She had meant no harm, she had thought no harm.

It was her innocence, her ignorance, that had led her into this passing error, and foolish John was so happy that all his sufferings passed from his mind.

"His old remembrances went from him wholly,
And all the ways of men, so vain and melancholy."

Everything smiled and brightened before him; the organ-grinder stopped and found out from poor Parsons's perpetual gesticulations that pennies were not to be expected; and something soft and tranquil and serene seemed to steal into the room and envelop the two, who were betrothing themselves over again, or so they thought. "Papa says you are to come to Fernwood. You must come and let me nurse you," Kate whispered in his ear. "That would be too sweet," John whispered back again; and then she opened the note to his mother and

wrote a little postscript to it, with his arm round her, and his poor scarred face over her shoulder watching every word as she wrote it. "He looks so frightful," Kate wrote, "you never saw any one so hideous, dear mamma, or such a darling [don't shake my arm, John]. I never knew how nice he was, nor how fond I was of him, till now."

This was how the day ended which had been begun in such misery; for it was nearly dusk when Kate left him with the faithful Parsons. "Indeed you shall not come with me," she said, "you who ought to be in bed—" but, notwithstanding this protest and all his scars, he went with her till they came within sight of the bank, where the carriage was standing. Of course it did him harm, and the doctor was very angry; but what did John, in the delight of his heart, care for that?

CHAPTER XVIII.

A day or two after this visit John found himself at Fernwood.

It was not perhaps a judicious step for any of them. He came still suffering—and, above all, still marked by his sufferings—among a collection of strangers to whom the bank, and the fire, and the value of the papers he had saved, were of the smallest possible consequence, and who were intensely mystified by his heterogeneous position as at once the betrothed of Kate Crediton and a clerk in her father's bank. Then there was a sense of embarrassment between him and Mr Crediton which it was impossible either to ignore or to make an end of—John had done so much for the man who was so unwilling to grant him anything in return. He had not only saved the banker's daughter, but his papers, perhaps his very habitation, and the bulk of all he had in the world, and Mr Crediton was confused by such a weight of obligations. "I must take care he don't save my life next,"

he said to himself; but, notwithstanding this weight of gratitude which he owed, he was not in the least changed in his reluctance to pay. To give his child as salvage-money was a thing he could not bear to think of; and when he looked at John's pale face among the more animated faces round him, Mr Crediton grew well-nigh spiteful. "That fellow! without an attraction!"—he would say to himself. John was not handsome; he had little of the ready wit and ready talk of society; he did not distinguish himself socially above other men; he was nobody to speak of—a country clergyman's son without a penny. And yet he was to have Kate! Mr Crediton asked himself why he had ever consented to it, when he saw John's pale face at his table. He had done it—because Kate had set her heart upon it—because he thought Kate would be fickle and change her mind—because—he could scarcely tell why,

but always with the thought that it would come to nothing. He would not allow, when any one asked him, that there was an engagement. "There is some nonsense of the kind," he would say, "boy and girl trash. I take it quietly because I know it never can come to anything. He saved her that time her horse ran away with her, and it is just a piece of romantic gratitude on her part. If I opposed it I should make her twice as determined, and therefore I don't oppose." He had said as much to almost everybody at Fernwood, though neither of the two most immediately concerned had the least idea of it. And this was another reason why the strangers were mystified and could not make out what it meant.

As for Kate, though she had been so anxious for his coming, it cannot be said that it made her very happy; for the first time the complications of the matter reached her. She was not, as when she had been at Fanshawe, a disengaged young lady able to give up her time to her lover, but, on the contrary, the mistress of the house, with all her guests to look after, and a thousand things to think of. She could not sit and talk with him, or walk with him, as she had done at the Rectory. He could not secure the seat next to her, or keep by her side, as, in other circumstances, it would have been so natural for him to do. He got her left hand at table the first day of his arrival, and was happy, and thought this privilege was always to be his; but, alas! the next day was on the other side, unable so much as to catch a glimpse of her. "I am the lady of the house. I have to be at everybody's beck and call," she said, trying to smooth him down. "On the contrary, you ought to do just what you please," said foolish John; and he wandered about all day seeking opportunities to pounce upon her—for, to be sure, he cared for nobody and nothing at Fernwood but Kate, and he was ill and sensitive, and wanted to be

cared for, even petted, if that could have been. He could not go out to ride with the rest of the party on account of his injured hand, but Kate had to go, or thought she must, leaving him alone to seek what comfort was possible in the library. No doubt it was very selfish of John to wish to keep her back from anything that was a pleasure to her, but then he was an eager, ardent lover, who had been much debarred from her society, and was set on edge by seeing others round her who were more like her than he was. To be left behind, or to find himself shut out all day from so much as a word with her, was one pang; but to find even when he was with her, that he had little to say that interested her, and to see her return to the common crowd as soon as any excuse occurred to make it possible, was far harder and struck more deep. He would sit in a corner of the drawing-room and look and listen while the conversation went on. They talked about the people they knew, the amusements they had been enjoying, the past season and the future one, and a hundred little details which only persons in their own "set" could understand. John himself could have talked such talk in college rooms or the chambers of a friend, but he would have thought it rude to continue when strangers were present; but the fashionable people did not think it rude. And even when he was leaning over her chair whispering to her, he could note that Kate's attention failed, and could see her face brighten and her ear strain to hear some petty joke bandied about among the others. "Was it Mr Lunday that said that? it is so like him," she said once in the very midst of something he was saying. And poor John's heart sank down—down to his very boots. That he did not himself find any companionship among the fashionable people was of very much less consequence. What did that matter? He had

not gone to Fernwood to make fine acquaintances. He had gone to see her—and there was not five minutes in the day when he could have her to himself; and even in these five minutes her attention would go away from him, attracted by some nonsense spoken by some one who was nothing to her, and whose talk was not worth listening to. What a fate for him! And then she had a hundred things to do in concert with these insipidities. She sang with one, and John did not sing, and had to look on with the forlornest thoughts, while a precious hour would pass, consumed by duet after duet and such talk as the following:—"Do you know this?" "Let us try that." "I must do something to amuse all those people," she would say, when he complained. She was not angry with him for complaining, but always kind and sweet, and ready, if she gave him nothing else, to give him one of her pretty smiles.

"But I shall be gone directly, and I have not had ten minutes of you," he said, bitterly.

"Oh, a great deal more than ten minutes," said Kate; "you unkind, exacting John! When I was at Fanshawe I had all my time on my hands, and nobody but you to think of;—I mean, no other claims upon me. Don't you think it hurts me as much as any one, when they all sweep round me, and I see your dear old face, looking so pale and glum, on the outside? Please don't look so glum! You know I should so much, much rather be with you."

"Should you?" said John, mournfully. Perhaps she believed it; but he found it so very hard to believe. "Dear, I don't mean to be glum, and spoil your pleasure," he said, with a certain pathetic humility; "perhaps I had better go and get to my work again, and wait for the old Sunday nights when you come back."

"That will look as if you were angry with me," she said. "Oh, John, I thought you would under-

stand! You know I can't do what I would do with all these people in the house. What I should like would be to nurse you and take care of you, and be with you always; but what can I do with all these girls and people? I hate them sometimes, though they are my great friends. Don't go and make me think you are angry. It is *that* that would spoil my pleasure. Look here! come and get your hat, and bring me a shawl; there is time for a little walk before the dinner-bell rings."

And then the poor fellow would be rapt into paradise for half an hour under shadow of the elm-trees, which were beginning to put on their bright-coloured garments. His reason told him how vain this snatch of enjoyment was, and gave him many a dim warning that he was spending his life for nought, and giving his treasure for what was not bread; but at such moments John would not listen to the voice of reason. Her hands were on his arm—her head inclining towards him, sometimes almost touching his sleeve—her eyes raised to his—her smile and her sweet kind words all his own. She was as kind as if she had been his mother—as tender and affectionate and forbearing with him. "You are so cross, and so exacting, and so unkind. Because I am fond of you, is that any reason why you should tyrannise over me?" said Kate, with a voice as of a dove close to his ear. And how could he answer her but with abject protestations of penitence and ineffable content?

"It is because I hunger for you, and I have so little of my darling," said repentant John; "what do I care for all the world if I have not my Kate?"

"But you have your Kate, you foolish boy," she said; "and what does anything matter when you know that? Do I ever distrust you? When I see you talking to somebody at the very other end of the drawing-room, just when I am

wanting you perhaps, I don't make myself wretched, as you do. I only say to myself, Never mind, he is my John and not hers; and I am quite happy—though I am sure a girl has a great deal more cause to be uneasy than a man."

And when John had been brought to this point, he would swallow such a speech, and would not allow himself to ask whether it was possible that his absence at the other end of the drawing-room could make Kate wretched. Had he put the question to himself, no doubt Reason would have come in; but why should Reason be allowed to come in to spoil the moments of happiness which come so rarely? He held the hands which were clasped on his arm closer to his side, and gave himself up to the sweetness. And he kept her until ever so long after the dressing-bell had pealed its summons to them under the silent trees. It was the stillest autumn night—a little chill, with a new moon which was just going to set as the dining-room was lighted up for dinner—and now and then a leaf detached itself in the soft darkness, and came down with a noiseless languid whirl in the air, like a signal from the unseen. One of these fell upon Kate's pretty head as she raised it towards her lover, and he lifted the leaf from her hair and put it into his coat. "I will give you a better flower," said Kate; "but oh, John, I must go in. I shall never have time to dress. Well—then, just one more turn: and never say I am not the most foolish yielding girl that ever was, doing everything you like to ask—though you scold me and threaten to go away."

This interview made the evening bearable for John; and it was all the more bearable to him, though it is strange to say so, because Fred Huntley had returned, and sat next him at dinner. He had hated Fred for some days, and was not yet much inclined towards him; but still there was a pleasure

in being able to talk freely to some one, and to feel himself, to some extent at least, comprehended, position and all. He was very dry and stiff to Huntley at first, but by degrees the ice broke. "I have never seen you since that night," said Fred. "My heart has smote me since for the way in which I left you, lying on those door-steps. In that excitement one forgets everything. But you bear considerable marks of it, I see."

"Nothing to signify," said John; and Fred gave him a nod, and began to eat his soup with an indifference which was balm to the other's excited feelings. Finding thus that no gratitude was claimed of him, John grew generous. "I hear it was you who dragged me out; and I have never had a chance of thanking you," he said.

"Thanking me—what for? I don't remember dragging any one out," said Fred. "It was very hot work. I did not rush into the thick of it, like you, to do any good; but I daresay I could give the best description of it. Have they found out how much damage was done?—but I suppose the bank is still going on all the same."

"Banks cannot stop," said John, "unless things are going very badly with them indeed."

"That comes of going in for a special study," said Huntley; "you always did know all about political economy, didn't you? No, it wasn't you, it was Sutherland—never mind; if you have not studied it theoretically, you have practically. I often think if I had gone in for business it would have been better for me on the whole."

"You have less occasion to say so than most men," said John.

"Because we are well off?—or because I have got my fellowship, and that sort of thing? I don't know that it matters much. A man has to work—or else," said Fred, with a sigh, swallowing something more than that *entrée*, "he drifts

somehow into mischief whether he will or no."

Did he cast a glance at the head of the table as he spoke, where Kate sat radiant, dispensing her smiles on either hand? It was difficult to imagine why he did so, and yet so it seemed. John looked at her too, and for the moment his heart failed him. Could he say, as she herself had suggested, "After all, she is my Kate and no one's else," as she sat there in all her splendour? What could he give her that would bear comparison? Of all the men at her father's table, he was the most humble. At that moment he caught Kate's eye, and she gave him the most imperceptible little nod, the brightest momentary glance. She acknowledged him when even his own faith failed him. His heart came bounding up again to his breast, and throbbed and knocked against it, making itself all but audible in a kind of shout of triumph. Then he turned half round to his companion, with heightened colour, and an animation of manner which was quite unusual to him. He found Huntley's eyes fixed upon his face, looking at him with grave, wondering, almost sympathetic interest. Of course Fred's countenance changed as soon as he found that it was perceived, and sank into the ordinary expressionless look of good society. He was the spectator looking on at this drama, and felt himself so much better qualified to judge than either of those more closely concerned.

"How do you like Fernwood?" Huntley began, with some precipitation. "It is rather too full to be pleasant while you are half an invalid, isn't it? Does your arm give you much pain?"

"It is very full," said John, "and one is very much alone among a crowd of people whom one does not know."

"You will soon get to know them," said Fred, consolingly; "people are very easy to get on with nowadays on the whole."

"I am going away on Thursday," said John.

"What! the day after to-morrow? before your arm is better, or—anything different? Do you know, Mitford, I think you stand a good deal in your own light."

"That may be," John said, hotly, "but there are some personal matters of which one can only judge for one's self."

Fred made no answer to this; he shrugged his shoulders a little as who should say, It is no business of mine, and began to talk of politics and the member for Camelford, about whose election there were great searchings of heart in the borough and its neighbourhood. An inquiry was going on in the town, and disclosures were being made which excited the district. The two young men turned their thoughts, or at least their conversation, to that subject, and seemed to forget everything else; but whether the election committee took any very strong hold upon them, or if they were really much interested about the doings of the man in the moon, it would be hard to say.

The drawing-room was very bright and very gay that evening—like a scene in a play, John was tempted to think. There was a great deal of music, and he sat in his corner and looked and saw everything, and would have been amused but for the sinking of his heart. Kate was in the very centre of it all, guiding and directing, as it was natural she should be. The spectator in the corner watched her by the piano, now taking a part, now accompanying, now throwing herself back into her chair with an air of relief when something elaborate had been set agoing, and whispering and smiling behind her fan to some favoured being, though never to himself. The drawing-room was long and lofty, with an open arched doorway at either end leading to the anteroom on one side and the boudoir on the other. It was at the latter end that John sat; and

now and then people would go past him into the small room to *bouder*, or otherwise amuse themselves; and in his weariness his eyes sometimes followed these passing figures, not that he was attracted by them, but only, as weary watchers have a way of doing, that he might perhaps see some change that should be more pleasant to him when his eyes returned to their natural centre. When they did so, however, he saw something which flushed him with a sudden pang and heat. It was Fred Huntley, to whom Kate was speaking. He was stooping down over her, leaning on the back of a chair, and Kate's face was raised to him and half screened with her fan. Their talk looked very confidential, very animated and friendly; and it seemed to John (but that must have been a mistake) that she gave him just the tips of her fingers as she dismissed him. Fred rose from the chair on which he had been half kneeling with a little movement of his head, which Kate reciprocated, and went off upon a meandering passage round the room. She had given him some commission, John felt—to him, and not to me, he said bitterly in his heart, and then tried to comfort himself, not very successfully, with the words she had taught him, "After all, she is my Kate and not his." Was she John's? or was it all a dream and phantasmagoria, that might vanish in an instant and leave no trace behind? He felt that if he closed his eyes for a moment, he might find, on reopening them, that all the lights and the brightness had vanished, that the music had resolved itself into some chance *bourdonnement* of bird or insect, and that he should know himself to be in fact, as he was in spirit, alone. And he did close his eyes in the caprice of a heart very ill at ease. When he opened them again he found that something had happened more disenchanting than if the light had

turned into darkness and the gay sounds into nothing. It was that Fred Huntley was approaching himself, and that this was the mission with which Kate, giving him the tips of her fingers, had intrusted the man whom of all others it most revolted him to be put in charge of. Fred managed the business very cleverly, and would have taken in any unsuspecting person; but John, on the contrary, was horribly suspicious, looking for pricks at all possible points. The ambassador threw himself into a vacant chair which happened to be handy, and stretched himself out comfortably in it, and said nothing for a minute. Then he yawned (was that, too, done on purpose?) and turned to John. "Were you asleep, Mitford?" he said; "I don't much wonder. It's very amusing, but it's very monotonous night after night."

"I have not had so much of it as you have, to get so tired of it," said John.

"Well, perhaps there is something in that; but, after all, there are some nice people here. The worst for a new-comer," said Fred, poisoning himself lazily in his chair, "is, that everybody has made acquaintance before he comes; and till he has been there for some time and gets used to it, he is apt to feel himself left out in the cold. Of course you can't have any such sensations in this house—but I have felt it; and Ka—Miss Crediton, though she is an admirable hostess, can't be everywhere at once."

"But she can send ambassadors," said John, with a faint attempt at a smile.

"Oh yes; of course she can send ambassadors," said Huntley, confused, "when she has any ambassadors to send. I wanted to ask you, Mitford, about that archaeological business your father takes so much interest in. I hear they are to visit Dulchester—"

"Did she tell you that?" said John. "My dear fellow, say to me

plainly, I have been sent to talk to you and draw you out. That is reasonable and comprehensible, and I should not be ungrateful. But let us talk since we are required to do so. When are you likely to be at Westbrook? I want to go home one of these days; and my mother would like to see you, to thank you——”

“To thank me for what?” said Fred, with much consternation.

“For dragging me out of that fire. I don’t say for saving my life, for it did not come to that—but still you have laid me under a great obligation,” said John, with a setting together of his teeth which did not look much like gratitude; and then he rose up sud-

denly and went away out of the corner, leaving Huntley alone in the chair, and not so happy as his wont. As for John himself, he was stung to exertions quite unusual to him. He went and talked politics, and university talk, and sporting talk, with a variety of men. He did not approach any of the ladies—his heart was beating too fast for that; but he stood up in the doorway and against the walls wherever the men of the party most congregated. And he never so much as looked at the creature who was at once his delight and his torment during all the long weary tedious evening, which looked as if it never would come to an end and leave him at peace.

CHAPTER XIX.

Next morning John packed himself up before he saw any one. He had not slept all night. It is true that the incidents of the past evening had been trifling enough—not of sufficient consequence to affect, as his sudden departure might do, the entire complexion of his life. It was only as a climax, indeed, that they were of any importance at all; but as such, they had wound him up to a point of resolution. The present state of affairs, it was evident, could not go on. Had he been a mere idle man of society, he said to himself, in whose life this perpetual excitement might supply a painful-pleasant sensation, then it might have been possible; but he could not, love as he might, wear away his existence in watching a girl’s face, or waiting for such moments of her society as she might be able to give him. It was impossible: better to go away where he should never see her again; better to give up for ever all the joys of life, than wear out every vestige of manliness within him in this hopeless way. He had been born to higher uses and better purposes surely, or where was the good of

being born at all? Accordingly he prepared all his belongings for instant departure. He did not enter on the question, what should come after, or whether any result would follow. He was not breaking off anything, he said to himself. Kate was still dearer to him than anything in earth or heaven, he acknowledged with a sigh; but unless perhaps time or Providence might arrange the terms of their intercourse on a more possible footing, that intercourse for the present must be suspended. He could not go on. With this resolution in his mind he went down-stairs; and looked so pale, that he attracted the attention of the lady who sat next to him at the breakfast-table, where Kate, who was so often late, had not yet appeared.

“I am afraid you are ill,” she said; “I fear your arm pains you more than usual. I think I knew your mother, Mr Mitford, a thousand years ago. Was not she a Miss Olive, of Burton? Ah, yes! I remember—one of the prettiest girls I ever saw. I think—you are a little like her,” said this benevolent woman, with a slight hesita-

tion. And then there was a titter at the table, in which John did not feel much disposed to join.

"Oh no," cried Kate, who had just come in; "it is not him that is like Mrs Mitford, but *me*. I allow he is her son, but that does not matter. I was at Fanshawe Regis ever so long in summer. Mr John, tell Lady Winton she was like me when she was a girl, and I shall be like her when I am an old lady. You know it is so."

And she paused a moment just beside him, with her hand on Lady Winton's chair, and looked into John's pale face as he rose at her appeal. Something was wrong—Kate was not sure what. Lady Winton, perhaps, had been annoying him with questions, or Fred Huntley with criticism. It did not occur to her that she herself could be the offender. She looked into John's face, meaning to say a thousand things to him with her eyes, but his were blank, and made no reply.

"She was prettier than you are, Kate," said Lady Winton, with a smile.

"Nay," said John, unawares. He had not meant to enter into the talk—but to look at her standing there before him in her fresh morning dress, in all her perfection of youth and sweetness, and to believe that anybody had ever been more lovely, was impossible. At that moment, when he was about to leave her, he could have bent down and kissed the hem of her dress. It seemed the only fitting thing to do, but it could not be done before all these people. Kate was still more and more perplexed what he could mean. His eyes, which had been blank, lighted up all in a moment, and spoke things to her which she could not understand. What was the meaning of the pathos in them—the melancholy, the dumb appeal that almost made her cry? She gave a little laugh instead, much fluttered and disturbed in her mind the while,

and nodded her head and went on to her seat at the head of the table.

"When one's friends begin to discuss one's looks, don't you think it is best to withdraw?" she said. "Oh, thanks, Madeline, for doing my duty. It is so wretched to be late. Please, somebody, have some tea."

And then the ordinary talk came in and swept this little episode out of sight.

When breakfast was over, and one after another the guests began to disperse to their morning occupations, Kate, turning round to accompany one of the last to the morning room, where all the embroidery and the practising and the gossip went on, had her uncomfortable thoughts brought back in a moment by the sight of John standing right in her way, holding out his hand. "I am obliged to go away," he said, in the most calm tone he could muster. "Good-bye, Miss Crediton; and thanks, many thanks."

"Going away!" cried Kate, standing still in her amazement.

"Going away! Has anything happened at Fanshawe Regis—Your mother—or Dr Mitford—?"

"They are both well," he said. "I am not going to Fanshawe, only back to the town to my work. Good-bye."

"I must hear about this," said Kate, abruptly. "Please don't wait for me, Madeline; I want to speak to Mr Mitford. Go on, and I will join you. Oh, John, what does it mean?" she cried, turning to her lover, almost without waiting until the door had closed on her companion. By this time everybody was gone, and the two were left alone in the great empty room where five minutes ago there had been so much sound and movement. They were standing in front of one of the deeply-recessed windows, with the light falling direct upon them as on a stage. He held out his hand again and took hers, which she was too much disturbed to give.

"It is nothing," he said, with a forlorn sort of smile, "except just that I must go away. Don't let that cloud your face, dear. I can't help myself. I am obliged to go."

"Is any one ill?" she cried; "is that the reason? Oh, John, tell me! are you really *obliged* to go? Or is it — anything — we have done?"

"No," he said, holding her hand in his. "It is all my fault. It does not matter. It is that I cannot manage this sort of life. No blame to you, my darling. Don't think I am blaming you. When I am back at my work, things will look different. I was not brought up to it, like you. You must pardon me as you would pardon me for being ignorant and not knowing another language; but it is best I should go away."

"John!" she cried, the tears coming with a sudden rush into the clear wondering eyes that had been gazing at him so intently, "what have I done?"

"Nothing—nothing," he said, stooping over her hand and kissing it again and again. "There is only myself to blame. I can't take things, I suppose, as other people do. I am exacting and inconsiderate and—— Never mind, dear. I must go away; and you will not remember my faults when I am gone."

"But I never thought you had any faults," cried Kate. "You speak as if it were me. I never have found fault with you, John—nor asked anything more—nor—I know I am silly. Tell me, and scold me, and forgive me. Say as papa does—it is only Kate. I know I did not mean it. Oh, John, dear, if I beg your pardon, though I don't know what I have done——"

"You have done nothing," he cried, in despair. "Oh, my Kate! are you my Kate? or are you a witch coming into my arms to distract me from everything? No, no, no! I must not be conquered

this time. My love, it will be best for both of us. I cannot go on seeing you always within my reach and always out of my reach. I would have you always like this—always here—always mine; but I can't have you; and I have no strength to stand by at a distance and look on. Do you understand me now? I shall go away so much happier because of this five minutes. Good-bye."

"But, John!" she cried, clinging to him, "don't go away; why should you go away? I will do anything you please. I will—make a change; don't go and leave me. I want you to be here."

"You break my heart!" he cried; "but I cannot be here. What use is it to you? And to me it is distraction. Kate! don't ask me to stay."

"But it is of use to me," she said, with a flush on her face, and an expression unlike anything he had seen before—an uneasy look, half of shame and half of alarm. Then she turned from him a little, with a slight change of tone. "It is a strange way of using me," she said, looking steadfastly at the carpet, "after my going to you, and all; not many girls would have gone to you as I did; you might stay now when I ask you—for my sake."

"I will do anything in the world for your sake," he said; "but, Kate, it does you no good, you know. It is an embarrassment to you," John went on, with a half-groan escaping him, "and it is distraction to me."

Then there followed a pause. She drew her hand away from his with a little petulant movement. She kept her eyes away from him, not meeting his, which were fixed upon her. Her face glowed with a painful heat; her little foot tapped the carpet. "Do you mean that—other things—are to be over too?" she said; and twisted her fingers together, and gazed out of the window, waiting for what he had to say.

Such a question comes naturally to the mind of a lover whenever there is any fretting of his silken chain; and accordingly it was not novel to John's imagination—but it struck upon his heart as if it had been a blow. "Surely not—surely not," he answered, hastily; "not so far as I am concerned."

And then they stood again—for how long?—side by side, not looking at each other, waiting a chance word to separate or to reunite them. Should she be able to bear her first rebuff? she, a spoiled child, to whom everybody yielded? Or could she all in a moment learn that sweet philosophy of yielding in her own person, which makes all the difference between sorrow and unhappiness? Everything—the world itself—seemed to hang in the balance for that moment. Kate terminated it suddenly, in her own unexpected way. She turned on him all at once, with all the sweetness restored to her face and her voice, and held out her hand: "Neither shall it be so far as I am concerned," she said. "Since you must go, good-bye, John!"

And thus it came to an end. When he was on his way back to Camelford, and the visit to Fernwood, with all its pains and pleasures, and the last touch of her hand, were all things of the past, John asked himself, with all a lover's ingenuity of self-torment, if this frank sweetness of reply was enough? if she should have let him go so easily? if there was not something of relief in it? He drove himself frantic with these questions, as he made his way back to his poor little lodgings. Mr Crediton had looked politely indifferent, rather glad than otherwise, when he took his leave. "Going to leave us?" Mr Crediton had said. "I am very sorry; I hope it is not any bad news. But perhaps you are right, and perfect quiet will be better for your arm. Never mind about business—you must take your

own time. If you see Whichelo, tell him I mean to come in on Saturday. I am very sorry you have given us so short a visit. Good-bye." Such was Mr Crediton's farewell; but the young man made very little account of that. Mr Crediton's words or ways were not of so much importance to him as one glance of Kate's eye. What she meant by her dismay and distress, and then by the sudden change, the sweet look, the good-bye so kindly, gently said, was the question he debated with himself; and naturally he had put a hundred interpretations upon it before he reached the end of his journey. It was still but mid-day when he reached the little melancholy shabby rooms which were his home in Camelford. The place might be supportable at night, when he came in only for rest after the day's labours, though even then it was dreary enough; but what could be thought of it in the middle of a bright autumn day, when the young man came in and closed his door, and felt the silence hem him in and enclose him, and put seals, as it were, to the grave in which he had buried himself. Full day, and nothing to do, and a little room to walk about in, four paces from one side to the other—and a suburban street to look out upon, with blinds drawn over the windows, and plants shutting out the air, and an organ grinding melancholy music forth along each side of the way: could he stay still and bear it? When he was at Fernwood his rooms looked to him like a place of rest, where he could go and hide himself and be at peace. But as soon as he had entered them, it was Fernwood that grew lovely in the distance, where Kate was, where there were blessed people who would be round her all day long, and the stir of life, and a thousand pleasant matters going on. He was weary and sick of himself, and sick of the world. Could he sit down and read a novel in the light of that

October day—or what was he to do?

The end was that he took his portmanteau, which had not been unpacked, and threw it into a passing cab, and went off to the railway. He had not gone home since he came to his clerkship in the bank, and that was three months since. It seemed the only thing that was left for him to do now. He went back along the familiar road with something of the feelings of a prodigal approaching his home. It seemed strange to him when the porter at the little roadside station of Fanshawe touched his cap, and announced his intention of carrying Mr John's portmanteau to the Rectory. He felt it strange that the poor fellow should remember him. Surely it was years since he had been there before.

And this feeling grew as John walked slowly along the quiet country road that led to his home. Everything he passed was associated with thoughts which were as much over and past as if they had happened in a different existence. He had walked along by these hedges, rows pondering a thousand things, but scarcely one that had any reference to, any relation with, his present life. He had been a dreamer, planning high things for the welfare of the world; he had been a reformer, rousing, sometimes tenderly, sometimes violently, the indifferent country from its slumbers; sometimes, even, retiring to the prose of things, he had tried to realise the details of a clergyman's work, and to fit himself into them, and ask himself how he should perform them. But never, in all these questionings, had he thought of himself as a banker's clerk—a man working for money alone, and the hope of money. It was so strange that he did not know what to make of it. As he went on, the other John, his former self, seemed to go with him—and which was the real man, and which the phantom, he could not tell. All the quiet coun-

try lifted prevailing hands, and laid hold on him as he went home. It looked so natural—and he, what was he? But the country, too, had changed as if in a dream. He had left it in the full blaze of June, and now it was October, with the leaves in autumn glory, the fields reaped, the brown stubble everywhere, and now and then in the clear blue air the crack of a sportsman's gun. All these things had borne a different aspect once to John. He too had been a little of a sportsman, as was natural; but the dog and the gun did not harmonise with the figure of a banker's clerk. The women on the road, who stared at him, and curtsied to him with a smile of recognition, confused him, he could not tell why. It was so strange that everybody should recognise him—he who did not recognise himself.

And as he approached the Rectory, a vague sense that something must have happened there, came over him. It was only three days since he had received a letter from his mother full of those cheerful details which it cost her, though he did not know it, so much labour and pain to write. He tried to remind himself of all the pleasant everyday gossip, and picture of things serene and unchangeable which she had sent him; but still the nearer he drew and the more familiar everything became, the more he felt that something must have happened. He went in by the little garden-gate, which opened noiselessly, and made his way through the shrubbery, to satisfy himself that no cloud of uttermost calamity had fallen upon the house. It was actually a relief to him to see that the blinds were up and the windows open. It was a warm genial autumn day, very still, and somewhat pathetic, but almost as balmy as summer. And the drawing-room window stood wide open as it had done through all those wonderful June days when John's life had come to its climax. The

lilies had vanished that stood up in great pyramids against the butresses ; even their tall green stalks were gone, cut down to the ground ; and there were no roses, except here and there a pale monthly one, or a half-nipped, half-open bud. John paused under the acacia-tree where he had so often placed Kate's chair, and which was now littering all the lawn round about with its leaflets—to gain a glimpse, before he entered, of what was going on within. The room was in the shade, and at first it was difficult to make out anything. The dear, tender mother ! to whom he had been everything—all her heart had to rest on. What had she to recompense her for all the tender patience, all the care and labour she took upon herself for the sake of her Saviour and fellow-creatures ! Her son, who had taken things for granted all this time as sons do, opened his eyes suddenly as he stood peeping in like a stranger, and began to understand her life. God never made a better, purer woman ; she had lived fifty years doing good and not evil to every soul around her, and what had she in return ? A husband, who thought she was a very good sort of ignorant foolish little woman on the whole, and very useful in the parish, and handy to keep off all interruptions and annoyances ; and a son who had gone away and abandoned her at the first chance—disappointed all her hopes, left her alone, doubly alone, in the world. "It is her hour for the school, the dearest little mother," he said to himself, with the tears coming to his eyes ; "she never fails, though we all fail her ;" but even as the words formed in his mind he perceived that the room into which he was gazing was not empty. There she sat, thrown back into a chair ; her work was lying on the floor at her feet ; but John had never seen such an air of weariness and lassitude in his mother before. He re-

cognised the gown she had on, the basket of work on the table, all the still life round her ; but her he could not recognise. She had her hands crossed loosely in her lap, laid together with a passive indifference that went to his heart. Could she be asleep ? but she was not asleep ; for after a while one of the hands went softly up to her cheek, and something was brushed off, which could only be a tear. He could scarcely restrain the cry that came to his lips ; but at that moment the door, which he could not see, must have opened, for she gave a start, and roused herself, and turned to speak to somebody. "I am coming, Lizzie," John heard her answer in a spiritless, weary tone ; and then she rose and put away her work, and took up her white shawl, which was lying on the back of a chair. She liked white and pretty bright colours about her, the simple soul. They became her, and were like herself. But when she had wrapped herself in the shawl, which was as familiar to John as her own face, his mother gave a long weary sigh, and sat down again as if she could not make up her mind to move. He had crept quite close to the window by this time, moved beyond expression by the sight of her, with tears in his eyes, and unspeakable compunction in his heart. "What does it matter now ?" she said to herself, drearily. She had come to be so much alone that the thought was spoken and not merely thought. When John stepped into the room a moment after, his mother stood and gazed at him as if he had risen out of the earth, and then gave a great cry which rang through all the house, and fell upon his neck. Fell upon his neck—that was the expression—reaching her arms, little woman as she was, up to him as he towered over her ; and would not have cared if she had died then, in the passion of her joy.

"Mother, dear, you are trem-

bling," John said, as he put her tenderly into her chair, and knelt down beside her, taking her hands into his. "I should not have been so foolish startling you; but I could not resist the temptation when I saw you here."

"Joy does not hurt," said Mrs Mitford. "I have grown so silly, my dear, now I have not you to keep me right; and it was a surprise. There—I don't in the least mean to cry; it is only foolishness. And oh, my poor John, your arm!"

"It is nothing," he said; "it is almost well. Never mind it. I am a dreadful guy, to be sure. Is that what you are looking at, mamma mia?" In his wan face and fire-scorched hair she had not known her child.

"Oh, John, that you could think so," she said, in her earnest matter-of-fact way. "My own boy! as if I should not have known you anywhere, whatever you had done to yourself. It was not that. John, my dear?"

"What, mother?"

"I was looking to see if you were happy, my dearest, dearest boy. Don't be angry with me. As long as you are happy I don't mind—what happens—to me."

John laid his head down on his mother's lap. How often he had done it!—as a child, as a lad, as a man—sometimes after those soft reproofs which were like caresses—sometimes in penitence, when he had been rebellious even to her; but never before as now, that her eyes might not read his heart. He did it by instinct, having no time to think; but in the moment that followed thought came, and he saw that he must put a brave face on it, and not betray himself. So he raised his head again, and met her eyes with a smile, believing, man as he was, that he could cheat her with that simulation of gladness which went no further than his lips.

"What could I be but happy?" he said; "but not to see you looking so pale, and trembling like this, my pretty mamma. You are too pretty to-day—too pink and too white and too bright-eyed. What do you mean by it? It must be put a stop to, now I have come home."

"What does that mean?" she asked, with tremulous eagerness. He was not happy; he might deceive all the world, she said to herself, but he could not deceive his mother. He was not happy, but he did not mean her to know it, and she would not betray her knowledge. So she only trembled a little more, and smiled pathetically upon him, and kissed his forehead, and shed back the hair from it with her soft nervous hands. "Coming home has such a sound to me. It used to mean the long nice holidays; and once I thought it meant something more; but now——"

"Now it means a week or two," he said; "not much, but still we can make a great deal out of it. And the first thing must be to look after your health, mother. This will never do."

"My health will mend now," she said, with a smile; and then, afraid to have been supposed to consent to the fact that her health had need of mending—"I mean I never was better, John. I am only a little—nervous—because of the surprise; the first thing is to make you enjoy your holiday, my own boy."

"Yes," he said, with a curious smile. Enjoy his holiday!—which was the escape of a man beaten from the field on which he had failed in his first encounter with fate. But I will not let her know that, John said to himself. And I must not show him that I see it, was the reflection of his mother. This was how they met again after the great parting which looked like the crisis of their lives.

CHATTERTON.

IN the middle of last century, in the year 1752, there was born, in the old town of Bristol, a child, perhaps the most remarkable of his entire generation, called Thomas Chatterton. He was a posthumous child, brought into the world with all that natural sadness which attends the birth of an infant deprived, from the very beginning of its days, of one-half of the succour, love, and protection to which every child has a right. The father might not be much to brag of—might not have done much for his boy; but still there is nothing so forlorn as such an entrance into the world. And it was a hard world into which the boy came, full of the bitter conditions of poverty, with little to soften his lot. His mother was poor, and had to work hard for her living and his. She had no time to spare for him, to understand what kind of a soul it was which she had brought into the world. If nature even had given her capacity to understand it, the chatter of her little pupils, the weary toil of her needlework, absorbed the homely woman. The family to which she belonged was of the lowest class, and yet possessed a certain quaint antiquity and flavour of ancient birth. As ancient as many a great family of squires or nobles were the Chattertons. The only difference to speak of between them and the Howards was, that while the representative of the one held the hereditary office of Earl Marshal of England, the other held only that of gravedigger of St Mary Redcliffe—but with a hereditary succession as rigid and unbroken. For a hundred and twenty years which could be clearly reckoned, and no one could tell how many more which had

escaped in the darkness of time, Thomas had succeeded William, and William Thomas, in that lugubrious office. The pedigree, such as it was, was complete. They had buried all Bristol, generation after generation. The race, however, was perhaps beginning to break up in preparation for that final bloom which was to give it a name among men, for Chatterton's father had not held the hereditary place. It had passed in the female line to a brother-in-law, and he had made a little rise in the social scale, first as usher, and then as master of a free school close to the hereditary church of St Mary Redcliffe. Such a position implies some education, though probably it was neither profound nor extensive. He held the office of sub-chanter in the cathedral at the same time; and was a member, it would appear, of the jovial society of tradesmen, deriving a certain taste for music from the choral services of the cathedral, which probably many of them had taken part in, in their boyhood as choristers, which assembled in those days in certain well-known taverns. The most noticeable fact in his life, however, so far as his son is concerned, is his share in a kind of general robbery perpetrated by the community upon the muniment-room of St Mary Redcliffe, where a number of old papers had been preserved for centuries in certain ancient oak chests. These chests were broken open in order to find some deeds wanted by the vestry, and were left, with all their antique contents, at the mercy of the gravedigger's family, or any other that could obtain access to them. The parchments were carried off in boxfuls, to answer all kinds of sordid uses.

It was the usage of the eighteenth century. No doubt if any accident had befallen St Mary's itself, the citizens would have carted off the stones to repair their garden-walls with. Chatterton the schoolmaster carried off the old parchments, covered copy-books with them, and kept the records of mediæval life like waste paper about his house, ready to serve any small emergency. It was no such dreadful sin after all, to have been followed by so strange and solemn a punishment. Was it that the ghosts of citizens whom a Thomas Chatterton had buried, came clustering up, a crowd of angry spirits, to avenge the liberty thus taken with the yellow forgotten records of their wishes and hopes? The schoolmaster, thinking little of the ghosts or their vengeance, left his house full of those stolen documents, and thus left behind him, without knowing it, the fate of his unborn boy.

The widow was young—not more than one-and-twenty—when this child of tears was born. She was left, as is all but inevitable in such circumstances, penniless, to struggle for herself as best she could. When such a necessity happens to a poor lady, our hearts bleed over the helpless creature; but it is common, too common, to demand any particular comment among the poor. Mrs Chatterton took up a little school, and took in needlework. She had a little daughter older than her boy; she had women-friends about her working with her, helping her to keep her head above water, and probably, after all, was not so very much to be pitied for the loss of her jovial husband, who, according to the record, kept his good-humour for his cronies out of doors. But her boy was a wonder and a trouble to the poor young woman. Probably it was her hope and longing from his birth that he should be educated as became the son of a scholar; and it broke her heart to find that “he was dull in

learning, not knowing many letters at four years old.” These were the days of infant prodigies—for this stupidity on the part of the little Chatterton does not strike us with the same dismay as it struck his mother. There were, however, other puzzling peculiarities about the child. “Until he was six years and a half old, they thought he was an absolute fool,” says his mother's most intimate friend who lived in the house. He was sent back upon her hands by his father's successor in the free school, somewhere about that early age, as an incorrigible dunce. Poor little bothered melancholy boy! he would sit alone crying for hours, nobody knew why—and the sense of disappointment so natural to a female household finding out to its dismay that the little male creature belonging to it was not (as it hoped) a creature of overwhelming ability, does not seem to have been concealed from the child. “When will this stupidity cease?” his mother cried when “he was in one of his silent moods.” She had little pupils of her own, brisk little girls, learning their lessons, no doubt, with all the vivacity of town children kept alert by the tide of ordinary life going on around them; and the contrast must have been very galling to the young mother. At seven years old, we are told, “he would frequently sit musing in a seeming stupor; at length the tears would steal one by one down his cheeks—for which his mother, thinking to rouse him, sometimes gave him a gentle slap, and told him he was foolish.” No doubt it must have been very trying to the poor soul: her only boy, the son of a great scholar, and nothing more than this coming of him! One can forgive Mrs Chatterton for giving that gentle slap to the weeping child over the fire. It is hard upon a widow to be driven to confess to herself that there is nothing more than ordinary—nay, perhaps something less than ordinary—about her fatherless boy.

This dulness, however, lasted but a short time. With a certain curious wasteful Vandalism which seems to have been peculiar to the age in small things as well as great, Mrs Chatterton, who made thread-papers of the old parchments out of St Mary's, tore up for waste paper an old music-book of her husband's. The moody child, sitting by, was suddenly attracted by the capital letters, which were illuminated, the story goes; so that it must have been a valuable book which his mother was thus destroying. This was the first step in his education. He learned to read thereafter from a black-letter Bible, and never could bear to read in a small book. In this quaint way the first difficulties were got over. One would think that to acquire modern English afterwards would have been almost as difficult as learning a new language; and the reader is tempted to wonder how any one in that homely ignorant sempstress-household should have been sufficiently at home in the black-letter to make a primer of it. Such, however, are the recorded facts. And what with the illuminated capitals and the black-letter book, the little fellow left off mooning, and woke up into the light of common day. "At seven he visibly improved, to her joy and surprise; and at eight years of age was so eager for books that he read from the moment he waked, which was early, until he went to bed, if they would let him."

So early, it would appear, as this age, the child had appropriated to himself a lumber-room in which, among other rubbish, were the boxes into which his father's spoils of old parchment had been turned; and here he was accustomed to shut himself up with such treasures as pleased him most. He had a turn for drawing, not unusual in children; and, instead of more ordinary playthings, he had collected "a great piece of ochre in a brown pan, pounce-bags full of charcoal-dust, which he had from a Miss Sanger,

a neighbour; also a bottle of black-lead-powder, which they once took to clean the stoves with, making him very angry." With these materials, and the unceasing supply of parchments to daub them on, what delicious begrimings the little artist must have made! Here, for the first time, the child becomes intelligible—perhaps an infant poet already, as some assert; but, what is better, an eager little boy, blacked all over with his hideous pigments, and making, no doubt, horrible pictures upon his parchments and his walls and his floor. They could not get him out of the room in which abode all this precious dirt. Sometimes the key was carried off, out of anxiety for his health, and his clothes, and his little grimy face; but then the little man fell to kissing and coaxing till he got it back again. So long as he remained in Bristol this garret was the refuge and comfort of his life.

When Chatterton was nearly eight years old he became a scholar of the Bluecoat School of Bristol, an institution called Colston's Hospital, founded by a merchant of Queen Anne's time, and therefore still in its youth. The dress, but unfortunately nothing else, was copied from that of Christ's Hospital. Bristol had already a grammar-school, and the supplementary institution was for poor children, and not by any means intended as a ladder to help them to ascend. They had the blue gown and yellow stockings, and funny little round cap, called, apparently, a tonsure, in the Bristol school; but they had not the liberal education which has made the London Bluecoat School so famous. The children were to be "instructed in the principles of the Christian religion as they are laid down in the Church Catechism," and not demoralised by Latin and Greek. Twice a-week this grand epitome of doctrine was to be expounded and brought down "to the meanest capacity" according to the rules of the Hospital:

poor fare enough for the little genius whom poverty shut out from any better training. The child, we are told, was elated at his election, "thinking," says his foster-mother, "he should there get all the learning he wanted; but soon he seemed much hurt, as he said he could not learn so much there as at home." Thus curiously came the first check upon his precocious hopes. No doubt the vague fame of his father's learning had been long held up before the boy, and it is equally certain that many of the old documents with which he had surrounded himself must have been in Latin, puzzling and tantalising him in his childish eagerness. Perhaps, with a child's confidence in his own powers, he had felt equal to the task of puzzling out the dead old solemn language by himself amid his ochre and his charcoal in the lumber-attic; and to come to nothing but the Catechism was hard. To be sure a certain amount of reading and writing must have accompanied the theology, and the life does not seem to have been a particularly hard one. Every Saturday he had holiday, and came home rejoicing at noon to rush up to his attic and lose himself in his old dreams. When he came down to tea he was all over stains of black and yellow. There, at least, he must have been happy enough—though it was hard to get him to meals; and even tea-time, fond as he was of tea, was not so attractive as his parchments and his ochre. Yet the boy apparently was at this time, to all spectators, an ordinary enough boy, with nothing moody or abstracted about him. He is described as a round-faced rosy child, with bright grey eyes, light hair, and dimples in his cheeks; very frank and friendly, making acquaintances with a natural ease scarcely to be expected from his other peculiarities, very affectionate at home, though impatient by moments, a characteristic not unusual in a school-

boy; and with every appearance of entering quite cheerfully, without any clouds brooding about him, upon the course of a commonplace life.

There is, however, one wonderful influence to be taken account of in his education, which had little to do with the training of his contemporaries. Mrs Chatterton's little house was opposite to the noble church of St Mary Redcliffe, and from his earliest infancy her boy had been accustomed to totter about that wonderful place. His uncle was sexton, and no doubt the natural pride of descent, pride common to all classes, had early made him aware that his ancestors for centuries had been its servants. It opened its great aisles to him full of whispering stillness, full of weird effects of light, with all those stately combinations of exquisite form and colour which the age was too prosaic to appreciate, but which went into the very depths of the young musser's heart. He was born with a thirst upon him for everything that was noble and stately and splendid; and here was his palace, where nothing narrow confined his imagination, and nothing mean distressed his fine sense of beauty. What a wonderful refuge—what a home for the dreamy childish imagination which had no words to explain itself, and nobody to understand, could it speak! "This wonder of mansyons," he called it in later days, when he got utterance; and the very title is significant, for it was the boy's mansion—his house in which he lived and mused. There a silent population—not mean and imperfect beings like the homely folks that walked and talked out of doors, but stately splendid images saying nothing, leaving all to an imagination rich enough to make up every deficiency—was around him; mailed knights, and ladies in veil and wimple—faithful mates lying solemn side by side through all the silent ages, names once so full of mean-

ing, now significant only to the little watcher with big eyes full of thought that brooded over them. He is supposed to have made a little picture of this house of his dreams, representing himself in his blue-coat dress, led by his mother, in the midst of that familiar scene. Even earlier than the blue-coat era, the little fellow, when missed from home, would be found seated by the tomb of William Canynge in the great silence. And here, there can be little doubt, arose the first beginnings of that visionary friendship which was the soul of all his after-life, his favourite illusion, and, as severe critics have thought, his crime. We have but to turn to our own nurseries, if indeed the remembrances of childhood are too far past to be recalled with a still more personal force, for an explanation of that first germ of Rowley which, one cannot tell when or how, dawned upon the mind of Chatterton in his childhood. Such dreams can scarcely be called rare among children. The present writer has by his side at this present moment a healthy, sturdy little boy, not overcharged with imagination, who lived for several of the first years of his life in constant communication with an imaginary friend, a very splendid, princely individual, whose sympathy consoled him in many a baby trouble. This child was free to talk of his beloved companion, who gradually disappeared behind the growing realities of existence, and now is as a dream to its creator. But it is easy to realise how such a lonely little dreamer as the boy Chatterton would cling to and expand into ever fuller and fuller being the image which he loved. While he sat by Canynge's tomb, in the speechless desolation of childhood, all alone, knowing that there was nobody in all the world with sufficient leisure to consider his wants and console his despondencies—nobody that could divine what he meant, or shed the warmth of sympathy about

his little life,—what wonder if the kind shadow which had full leisure for him and all his affairs—time to weave histories for him, to beguile him out of the present, to fill his ears with melodies which seem to come across the ages—should grow and grow as the boy grew, strengthening with his strength? All these long imaginary conversations which we suppose every intelligent child holds with a little crowd of interlocutors, a mere expenditure of superabundant fancy, must have been concentrated by little Chatterton into the one person of the kind priest, who was the companion of his soul, an ideal father to him, a teacher such as he could never have in the flesh. How the forlorn little fellow must have brightened unawares as he felt the soft steps of his visionary friend coming down the long stately aisle from the veiled altar! Had he just been saying a mass for William Canynge's Christian soul? Did he come with the serious calm upon him of those uncomprehended mysteries? When Priest Rowley appeared out of the religious light, the little dreamer was no longer alone. To any ordinary child, Rowley, in all likelihood, would have had existence only as the consoler, the depository of childish grievances, the sympathetic listener to all trouble. But to Chatterton he was more. The boy did not know in these early days that he was himself a poet; but he felt by instinct that the friend was who bent over him in visionary intimacy and consolation. When he was called back unwillingly to his little mean home, to the meals which he was not hungry enough to care for, to the monotonous hum of the lessons and litter of the dressmaking, and to the mother and sister, who were all too busy to do more than scold him for his absences, sometimes good-humouredly, sometimes sharply, but never with any sense of the unseen world, which was reality to him—what wonder if the boy was

like a being dropped from another sphere? The women at their work were not to blame. How were they to divine, as they sat and cut out their old-fashioned sleeves and bodices from patterns made out of the parchments of the muniment-room, that these were Rowley's parchments, written all over with a poetry yet illegible, but destined to grow clear in time? They would give him "a gentle slap" to rouse him, as they passed; they would be driven to momentary impatience by his meaningless silent tears. What did it all mean? when would this stupidity cease? But perhaps there was a wedding order on hand—perhaps the doleful black, which it was still more needful to get finished. They had to sit up into the night working for him, to mind their business, to thread those weary needles, and stitch those long, long lines of endless trains, or get through miles of frilling before night. It was no fault of theirs, poor souls! They gave him all they had to give, and did not even refuse the indulgence of that attic solitude, where Priest Rowley lived as much as he lived in the church, and where such tales of wonder waited the tingling ears of the little lonely boy.

It is hard to realise the possibility of a very severe intellectual disappointment at eight or even nine years old; but yet the difference between the practical and the ideal, between the enthusiasm of learning into which he was prepared to plunge and the routine of the merest schoolboy-life, seems to have restored something of the despondency of his early childhood to this strange little scholar. His mother and her friends began to grow anxious about him again when he shut himself up in his attic through the long holiday summer afternoons when every other Blue-coat boy was enjoying the air and sunshine. They made him angry by attempts to invade his solitude.

"I wish you would bide out of the room—it is my room," he cried, in boyish rage, thrusting his parchments out of sight. The women even alarmed themselves with the curious fancy that his ochre and charcoal were intended to stain his own face in order that he might join the gipsies—the strangest notion, considering the habits of the studious boy; but "when he began to write poetry he became more cheerful," his sister testifies. All through that childhood which represents youth in his short life he had been struggling with the silence round him, a little soul in prison known to no one but his Rowley; but when the gift of utterance came his chains began to break. When he was only ten he seems to have been confirmed, a curious instance of seeming maturity; and following on that event which appears to have roused in him all the half-real half-fictitious solemnity so often seen in children, he wrote his first poem, or at least the poem first published—a little "copy of verses" upon the Last Day, which is only remarkable as the beginning of his poetical efforts. It was published in 'Felix Farley's Journal,' a local paper, which afterwards received many of his productions. From that moment his restless pen was never still. A few months later he discovered with all the glee of a schoolboy that he could make it a weapon of offence, and immediately rushed at his foes, or at the innocent persons whom he chose to set up as adversaries. The temptation of irreverent youth to assail local dignities of all kinds, and to reap the quickly-got satisfaction of parochial stir and commotion, is always very potent; and a poet of eleven would have been a stoic indeed had he been able to withstand it. He fell upon "Churchwarden Joe," who had pulled down a beautiful cross in the churchyard of St Mary, and upon Apostate

Will, a less distinguishable butt, with wild delight. These early satires reveal to us all at once a whole little local world beyond Mrs Chatterton's house and the lumber-room on the one hand, and the grand aisles of St Mary's on the other. There are the bustling parish authorities, scorned yet feared, and all the babbling bee-hive of a school, and the masters, some de-pised and some beloved. And there is the half-seen audience of the parish behind reading the paper and chuckling over the allusions which everybody can understand; the whole stirred up and set into motion by the boy in his yellow stockings, about whom already there are strange rumours afloat, and who hugs himself in his secret, and feels, no doubt, a certain judiciary power of life and death, now the paper is open to him, and all Bristol lying helpless ready to become his victims. It says a great deal for Chatterton's better nature that a temptation so overwhelming at his age, and so potent on the untrained intelligence at all times, should have at least temporarily passed away from him. It was his priest who drew him into the gentler, more harmonious, regions of the past.

He was only twelve, say various witnesses, when he took to an usher called Phillips, his favourite master, a curious manuscript poem, which he had found, he said, among the parchments taken by his father from St Mary's. Phillips was a kind master, sympathetic and beloved; and he is said to have had some poetical knowledge and faculty: but he was not learned in ancient MSS. He gazed at this curious production with mingled consternation and curiosity. A schoolfellow who was present, and who afterwards attained some small local eminence as a poet, describes the event with something of the contempt of a man who knew himself to be quite as good as Chatterton. "For my own

part," he says, "having little or no taste for such studies, I repined not at the disappointment. Phillips, on the contrary, was to all appearance mortified—indeed much more so than at that time I thought the object deserved—expressing his sorrow at his want of success, and repeatedly declaring his intention of resuming the attempt at a future period." The MS. this informant asserts to have been the ballad of "Elinoure and Juga," certainly a very extraordinary production for a poet of twelve, and which was not published till five years later. It is one of the so-called Rowley poems, and if not the first written, was at least the first submitted to any eye but his own.

Probably up to this time no definite idea of the dangerous course upon which he was entering had come into the schoolboy's eager mind. We cannot imagine for an instant that any deliberate deceit was intended. It was one of the innocent mystifications, strange purposeless webs, half of pure imagination, half of mischievous intent to bewilder, which are so common among children. By this time his visionary companion had developed into clearer and clearer proportions. Nothing in life had come to him with sufficient force or vividness to withdraw him from the society of his gentle, unrepining, always sympathetic, spiritual associate. When even the mother was unkind, and the good school-master hard upon him, Rowley's countenance was never averted. From the first germ of the benign shadow in the great silent church whole histories had grown. The boy's imagination had worked out every accessory of the picture. The principal figure was Thomas Rowley, a parish priest, not a friar—the name probably seized upon at hazard from some chance roll of ancient names—the story made out bit by bit,—a friend of noble Master Canyge's, he of the great tomb—nay,

more than a friend—a brother dearly beloved. And then Canynge, too, found his place on the canvas. In short it was no canvas, but a magic mirror, into which those mystic figures floated, now one by one, now in a stately crowd. Naturally the priest became a man of letters, because in the mind of the dreaming boy there was nothing so high or honourable; and Canynge grew by his side into the enlightened patron, the head of the gentle company. What things they did, what witty conversations they held, what stately masques and splendid revels were heard before them! Chatterton was one of them as he mused. He saw the correspondence of his visionary friend with the abbots, and canons, and even bishops, who loved song like himself, and were ready now and then to throw in a supplementary lay. He assisted at the performance of "The Tragical Enterlude," and many another private drama represented before the refined society of Rudde House, William Canynge's dwelling. Not only names came easy to his fancy, but he was ready to invent a whole lineage, build a special convent, construct a new world, if needful, to justify the existence of the various personages who were grouped round Rowley. His whole mind and leisure must have been occupied by this wonderful dream. It saved him from all boyish and poetic yearnings after some one to love, respect, and honour in the outside world. He had Rowley for all these higher uses of the soul, and he was free, accordingly, to treat with a frank contempt the actual visible, but not half so real, men whom he saw around him every day.

None of the critics who have examined into the strange problem of this double existence, seem to have realised the phenomenon as in fact a sufficiently common one, elevated out of resemblance to the ordinary only by the genius of the boy. He was in the midst of a per-

petual drama, daily spreading further and further round him. His imagination was delighted with a constant succession of beautiful and curious visions. In his garret, all by himself, he was in the midst of the finest company. One festivity led to another. There were tournaments of arms and tournaments of song, and a thousand pageants, which swept him with them in their splendid passage. No doubt the first daring touch by which he made Rowley's poetry into actual verse, gave a certain thrill to the boy. The actual and the visionary clashed, and that tender fiction of the heart appeared, as it were, out of doors, where men, without any just powers of judging, might call it falsehood and forgery. But he was so young that this fear could not have appalled him much—twelve years old; and no doubt he felt a certain longing to make known to somebody what a splendid world he had possession of—how much wiser and cleverer he was than his neighbours—and what a horde of secret treasure he had upon which he could draw at will; a desire which was all mixed up and blended with a child's romancing, its uncertain sense of the boundary between the false and the fanciful, and love of everything dramatic and marvellous. This, according to every canon of human nature, and especially of a child's nature, seems to us the natural interpretation of the wonderful fiction of Rowley's poems. Rowley, no doubt, had come into being years before, to the ~~man's~~ consolation of his little companion's soul. *green*

We are not told whether he interpreted to Phillips the wonderful MS. which so much puzzled him; nor, indeed, has anything but the date of its first exhibition, and the "mortification" of the usher when he found himself unable to make it out, been preserved to us. A little later Chatterton distinguished himself by a piece of fiction of a less innocent but more amusing kind.

At the foot of the bridge which he had to cross every Saturday on his way home, was a pewterer's shop, kept by two men called Catcott and Burgum. They were not of the modern race of shopkeepers, prone to villas in the country and a discreet silence as to their means of income. They were men not ashamed of the counter, ready to hold their own with any comer; important in their own eyes, and not unnoted among their townsfolk. Burgum was the less elevated of the two, not born a citizen of Bristol, and possessing little education, but much vanity. Catcott, a clergyman's son, was a man of good connections, such as would scarcely be consistent nowadays with the pewterer's shop. His brother was a clergyman in the town, and he would seem to have had a certain place in society; but his love of display and notoriety was known to everybody. He was so fond of self-exhibition that he rode his horse over the planks of a half-built bridge, in order to have the honour of being the first to cross it; and, with equally silly daring, had himself hoisted up to place a pewter tablet under the crowning stone of the new church steeple, by way of preserving the record of his name to all posterity. Such a pair would seem to have been marked out for the tricks of any mischievous school-boy; and Chatterton was full of mischief and delight in his own skill and powers of mystification. No doubt the boy was known to both of them, as everybody, even a charity-boy, becomes known in a limited local circle. One day, when it is supposed he was about fourteen, he suddenly entered the shop he had passed so often, and disclosed a great discovery he had made. He had found the De Bergham pedigree amongst those wonderful inexhaustible papers of his. The shop was in the process of rebuilding; and Burgum, poor soul! was probably worn out by builders and painters and their lingering workmen when this wonderful news

was brought him. He fell at once into the snare. No wondering sense that a Bluecoat boy was an unlikely person to make such discoveries seems to have crossed his mind, any more than it did those of greater critics at a later period. He accepted the De Bergham pedigree for gospel, and begged a sight of it. Within a few days he received "an old piece of parchment about eight inches square, on which was the shield, blazoned and full of quarterings, of the great family to which he was said to belong, and a first instalment of the pedigree. This document was one of the most extraordinary kind. It set forth the arrival in England with the Conqueror, of a certain knight called Simon de Seyncte Lyze or Senliz, whose marriages and great deeds are described with solemn gravity. It had a heading in large text to the effect that it was an "Account of the Family of the De Berghams from the Norman Conquest to this time, collected from Original Records, Tournament Rolls, and the Heralds of March and Garter's Records, by Thomas Chatterton." It was enriched with marginal references, done in the very irony of mischief. "Roll of Battle Abbey," "Ex-stemma fam. Sir Johan de Leveches":—Stowe, Ashmole, Collins, Dugdale, Rouge Dragon, Garter, Norroy, and the Rowley MSS. being quoted as authorities. The lad even went so far as to cite "*Oral* ch. from Henry II. to Sir Jno. de Bergham," as one of the sources from which he had drawn his materials. There were Latin notes to this wonderful document, which, as at present to be seen, are translated in the handwriting of Barrett, the author of a history of Bristol, one of the leading antiquarians and *virtuosi* of the neighbourhood. These translations mark the curious fact that a man of some learning, and pretending to some acquaintance with the real antique, was actually taken in by the pedi-

gree, with its circumstantial records and dazzling blazonry. As for Burgum, who had no learning at all, he conceived no doubt on the subject; but with his heart beating proudly in his breast, presented the boy with five shillings for his timely and wonderful discovery. Never was there a more successful practical joke; and Chatterton must have left the shop swelling with fun and triumph, with his crown-piece in his pocket and delight in his heart.

He had not, however, done with the pewterer. The pedigree thus miraculously found brought down the family of De Bergham only to the thirteenth century, between which and the time of Henry Burgum there might be many slips. And accordingly, the discoverer, too lavish in his fertile powers of invention to cut any thread short which he could spin out, caught up the uncompleted tale, and gave its continuation with a still more lavish hand. What so easy as to sow distinguished personages into the roll which could be subjected to no test but that of imagination? Accordingly he pauses in the commonplace record of knights and ladies to interpolate a certain Master John de Bergham, a Cistercian monk, who "was one of the greatest ornaments of the age in which he lived," a poet, and translator of the *'Iliad'*, whose talents had been fully recognised in his own century, though grown somewhat dim in the eighteenth. "To give you an idea of the poetry of the age," said this strangest of heralds, "take the following piece, written by John de Bergham in the year 1320." And here follows the "Romaunte of the Cnyghte," one of the most archaic of all the poems, which, as well as a Latin letter from the University of Oxford, commending the high qualities of Friar John, is introduced into the very heart of the pedigree. We do not need to add that the Latinity of this letter, as well as sundry other scraps which shall follow, was of the most

doubtful kind. The second part of the De Bergham pedigree produced another crown for Chatterton's empty pockets, and no doubt he felt himself thoroughly well paid for the moment. A great deal of quaint indignation has been wasted on this piece of most elaborate nonsense. Such a trick, if performed by any public-school boy of the present day, would meet with more laughter than reprobation; but Chatterton's critics have made it out to be "indescribably ignorant and impudent," and no better than a piece of swindling. Poor fourteen-year-old boy! It was indescribably clever and mischievous, and, no doubt, would have been punished by a hard imposition had such a trick been discovered by a strong-minded master at Eton or Harrow; but poor Chatterton was not permitted the privileges of his boyhood. "It may console the reader who sympathises in such virtuous indignation," says Dr Wilson, who entertains other notions, "to know that the pedigree did not after all prove a bad investment. The copy-books, containing along with it and its *'Romaunte of the Cnyghte'*," some of the earliest transcripts of the Rowley poems, were ultimately disposed of by the family to Mr Joseph Cottle for the sum of five guineas." So thorough, however, was the belief of the descendant of the De Berghams in his new-found pedigree, that he actually submitted the document to the College of Heralds for confirmation—a step which, however, it is supposed was not taken till after Chatterton's death.

By this time the boy had begun to make friends out of his own sphere. The antiquarian Barrett, who was labouring busily at a history of Bristol, which has been covered with confusion, yet almost introduced to fame, by the fact that half its assertions are made on the authority of the Rowley MSS., began to traffic with him for his wonderful stock of papers, and "used

often to send for him from the charity-school, which was close to his house, and differ with him in opinion, on purpose to make him in earnest, and to see how wonderfully his eye would strike fire, kindle, and light up." At one time a hope of studying medicine under the care of this gentleman, who was a doctor, seems to have crossed his mind; and it is evident that he was permitted to read many medical works, and to pick up some superficial knowledge of the science. Barrett is much blamed by Dr Wilson for his want of insight into the poet's character, and for having repulsed his confidence and lost the opportunity of leading him safely into the paths of greatness. But notwithstanding all the sympathy we feel for Chatterton, it cannot be denied that he boasted his friends all round with charming impartiality, and afterwards satirised them with a plainness of speech at which it is natural enough to suppose they must have winced. Had anybody been able to foresee the blackness of darkness so soon to overtake him, the wild despair and miserable fate of a boy so full of exuberant life and power and prodigal energy, who can doubt that Barrett and Catcott and the rest, would have used their possibilities of help in a different way? But nobody ever foresees such wonderful and tragic breaks upon the ordinary routine of existence; and the boy in his rash precocity, and the men in their commonplace indifference, went their way, roused by no presentiment. A certain wonder, one would think, must have grown about the lad who could produce such treasures at a moment's notice; but it does not seem to have affected the minds of his school-fellows, who dabbled in small verses themselves, and were, each boy to his own consciousness, as good men as he. It is curious to find that none of the admiring devotion with which every gifted schoolboy in a higher class is regarded by some at least of his comrades, seems to

have attended Chatterton. Probably this is explained by the lower range of breeding and training, and that strange insensibility to personal influence, and high esteem for self, which make the tradesman-class everywhere the one least subject to any generous weakness of enthusiasm. The Bristol men who were boys with Chatterton were all indignant at the mere suggestion that Rowley and he were one. They were affronted by the idea. It was a personal injustice to them that their schoolfellow should be made out a genius. They had no objection to his acknowledged writings, which they considered no better than their own. But Rowley's poems, they were sure, with an indignation which had a touch of bitterness in it, were no more his writing than theirs. He had friends, but he had nobody who believed in him—a curious distinction of the class in which he was born. Had he been a gentleman's son, no doubt a young guard of honour, school-fellows, college friends, half of the youth he came across in his career, would have been ready to risk their life in proof of his genius. And the chances are, that in these circumstances the lad himself would never have been tempted to the fierce satire and bitter scorn of many of his youthful productions. But it is necessary for us to accept him as he is, a poor charity-boy among a set of young apprentices, Bristol tradesmen in the bud, all confident of being as good as he or as any one, and capable of no worship of the greater spirit in their midst.

After the era of the pedigree, Chatterton seems to have gone on with a still stronger flight. He cannot have been more than fifteen, for he still wore the dress of his school, when he met with the other partner in the pewterer's firm. No doubt Burgum had exhibited proudly to his partner the proofs of his own splendid descent, and pointed out the passing schoolboy

to whom he owed it ; and Chatterton probably was attracted towards Catcott by the achievement above recorded, his crossing of the half-built bridge upon planks laid from pier to pier, with a daring-do worthy of any knight of romance. This event took place in June 1767; and in July of the same year the lad left school, and put off his yellow stockings and tonsure-cap ; so it must have been on one of the summer days intervening that the two first met. Mr Catcott was walking with a friend in Redcliffe Church when he was informed of the fact that several ancient pieces of poetry had been found there, and were in the possession of a "young person" known to his informant. This news prompted him to seek Chatterton, perhaps to call him in as he went past, into the shop already so well known to him, which contained such a monument of his skill. The boy showed not the least reluctance to speak of his discoveries ; and, according to Catcott's statement, gave him at once "The Bristowe Tragedie ; or the Deth of Sir Charles Bawdin," and several of the smaller poems. Probably they were but submitted to his criticism and approbation. He was a man with a library, and every possibility of getting at books was precious to the boy ; and this was the commencement of a curious kind of friendship, in which there seems to have been little regard on the one side or the other, but a considerable attempt at mutual profit. In Catcott's hands many of the MSS. remained after Chatterton's death, and he does not seem to have made a generous use of them ; nor did any gleam of insight into the strange story occur to the eyes of the self-occupied shopkeeper. He too received Rowley with undoubting faith. The boy was but a charity-boy—one of the many blue-coated urchins that swarmed past the shop-windows all the year round, and broke the panes, and got in everybody's way. Genius ! Mr Catcott

would have laughed at the idea. The boy was old Chatterton's grandson, the gravedigger, and no doubt had got at the poems exactly as he said. Not the remotest suspicion of a hoax seems to have disturbed the composure or self-conceit of these shallow men. And thus the boy went and came—to Barrett, who probably gave him an occasional half-crown for the bits of curious information about old Bristol which he brought him from time to time, and who liked to see the light flash up in his great grey shining eyes ; to Catcott, who received his MSS. with pompous pretended knowledge ; and by-and-by to Catcott's clergyman brother, and other worthies of their set, no doubt with a wonder growing in his mind that no one divined the real source of all these marvels. One can imagine the lad's half-trouble, half-delight, in thus bewildering so many—and at the same time the wistful sense of uncomprehended power which must have grown upon him and driven him back to his visionary associates. We are told even that he tried more than once to confide in Barrett, faltering forth an admission that the fine and vigorous poem called the "Battle of Hastings," which he presented to the antiquary in his own handwriting, was actually his own composition, and "done for a friend." Barrett, wise man of the world, not to be taken in by such fictions, laughed at the boy. He pressed him to produce the rest of the poem, which was accordingly done at intervals, in fragments, as they could be composed ; and pressed him still further for the original MS., which the lad—amazed, disappointed, and yet filled—who can wonder ?—with a certain mischievous contempt for the man who swallowed every fiction he chose to bring yet laughed at the truth—instantly began to fabricate. His docility in such a case is very comprehensible. All the fun of his schoolboy nature, and all the scorn with which an inexperienced young soul looks upon

stupidity and intellectual blindness, must have moved him to fool his patron to the top of his bent. It was the man's sin, if any real sin was in it, and not the boy's.

In July 1767, Chatterton was transferred from school to the office of an attorney, to whom he was bound apprentice, the fee being supplied by the Hospital. He was to have no wages, but to be clothed, lodged, and maintained by his new employer, a Mr Lambert—to take his meals with the servants and sleep with the footboy; an arrangement which was supposed by all parties very satisfactory for a Blue-coat boy. So far as we are informed, he himself does not seem to have been any way revolted by it as we are; for it must be remembered that Chatterton as yet had only a boy's glorious sense of being able to do almost anything he tried—the first and perhaps the most delicious sensation of genius—without knowing what was his own real standing among all the owls and bats who were so much more important in the world's eye than he. His office hours were from eight o'clock in the morning till eight in the evening, with an hour in the middle of the day for dinner, and he was expected to return to his master's house every night by ten o'clock. Two hours in the evening were thus all he had for recreation of any kind, and these he almost invariably spent at his mother's house. During the two years he remained with Mr Lambert he was only once late in returning. These facts effectually dispose of all the insinuations made against the poor boy's character. He never drank, avoiding even the most modest potations—was fond of tea, and not, it would seem, without an innocent liking for confectionery, simplest of all the tastes of youth. Twelve hours in the solitude of the office, where now and then the footboy or a maid from Mr Lambert's would come on some pretended errand to make sure that

he was there, for the attorney himself was almost always absent; two hours in the evening spent with his mother among her shreds and patches, or in the beloved retirement of his lumber-room. Never did monk observe a severer routine of duty; and yet the poor boy was called a profligate: no imputation was ever more unjust or untrue.

But it would be wrong to suppose that this intermediate period was a loss to Chatterton. Mr Lambert's business seems to have been a very light one, and his apprentice must have been as much office-boy as clerk—"he had little of his master's business to do, sometimes not two hours in a day," says his sister; and though he was supposed to be "improving himself in professional knowledge" by copying precedents during the remainder of the long lonely days, there was plenty of time left for more congenial work. "Nearly four hundred closely-written folio pages" of these precedents are left to prove that he did not neglect even this musty work—which is no small tribute to his sense of duty; for the master was absent, and there was no one to keep him to the grindstone, and so many inducements to drop away. The office contained, besides a library of law-books, a complete edition of Camden's 'Britannia;' and his friends whom he supplied with a succession of wonders lent him books at least, which was some small return. A number of dictionaries of Saxon and early English, Speght's 'Chaucer,' and various old chronicles, fed his mind and formed his style. We are told that he compiled from these authorities for his own use an elaborate glossary in archaic and modern English, which was his constant companion. There can be no doubt, as Sir Walter Scott suggests, that to master a style so cumbrously and artificially antique must have taken almost as much time as the learning of a new language; but yet there is a great deal in the trick of

such a mode of writing, and we are inclined to believe that the real labour must have been in the compilation of the glossary, which made the rest easy enough—especially as the antiquity of the Rowley poems is entirely artificial; and the young poet does not seem to have felt that any study of the sentiments or forms of expression natural to the period was required to give an air of truthfulness to his productions, greedily and unhesitatingly as they were swallowed by all the authorities round him. The fact seems to have been that a certain impetuous, almost feverish, haste and impatience had come upon the lad unconsciously to himself. The silent moments flew over him as he laboured in that dreary little office. Something in him, something instinctive, inarticulate, incapable of giving any warning of what was to come, had been impressed by a sense of the shortness of the time and the quantity of work to do. We are informed repeatedly that the attorney on his visits to the office tore up pages of poetry which he found in his clerk's handwriting, and which he perceived was not law-work, nor within his range of comprehension; so that it is perfectly probable that a much larger quantity of the Rowley poems was produced than those which have reached us. In his ignorance and innocence most likely the boy was swept along by an eager desire to set Rowley, and his time and ways and everything surrounding him—the friends and citizens and noble knights who were so much kinder, nobler, and more true than anything in the eighteenth century—fully before his audience. He wanted, with a certain human longing at the bottom of all his childish trickery and intrigue, to convey to others some glimpse of that splendid visionary world which, from his earliest years, had surrounded himself. And he thought he had succeeded in doing so, poor, brilliant, foolish boy of ge-

nus! He thought his painfully-selected, uncouth words, and wonderful spelling, were no masquerade, but gave a real representation of the life he wanted to make apparent to the world. Nothing could show more clearly his unsophisticated simplicity; for he believed in their truth himself as fervently as the most credulous of all his dupes,—not in their truth of fact as the poems of Rowley, for that, of course, was impossible; but in their truth to the period they professed to represent, and real faithfulness to its characteristics—a belief which only shows how little educated, how simple and unacquainted with the history of the ages, and the difference between one and another, was the boy poet. The masquerade, transparent as it is to us, was reality to himself.

In 1768, when Chatterton was sixteen, after he had been a whole year in Mr Lambert's office, the new bridge, over which, when half built, Catcott had ridden with so much silly braggadocio, was formally opened; and on occasion of this ceremony, Chatterton tried his hand at a mystification of the general public. He sent an extract to a local paper out of Rowley's wonderful stories, in which, it appeared, every kind of illustration appropriate to every variety of experience might be found. "The following description of the Mayor's first passing over the Old Bridge, taken from an old MS., may not at this time be unacceptable to the generality of your readers," he says, signing himself "Dunelmus Bristolensis," to 'Farley's Bristol Journal;' and the accompanying extract was given with all formality as it is quoted. The reader will perceive how, under the strange and over-elaborate marks of antiquity, are forms of expression audaciously modern, and a general air of to-day, by which no true antiquary could ever be deceived:—

"On Fridaie was the Time fixed for passing the newe Brydye: Aboute the Time of the Tollynge the tenth Clock,

Master Greggorie Dalbenya, mounted on a Fergreyne Horse, enformed Master Maior all Thyngs were prepared; when two Beadils want fyrst streying fresh stre, next came a Manne dressed up as follows: Hose of Goatskyn, erinepart outwards, Doublet and Waystcoat also, over which a white Robe without sleeves, much like an albe, but not so longe, reeching but to his Lende; a girdle of Azure over his left shoullder, rechde also to his Lende on the Ryght, and doubled back to his Left, bucklying with a Gouldin Buckel, dangled to his knee; thereby representing a Saxon Elderman. In his hande he bare a shield, the Maystrie of Gille a Brogton, who paincted the same, representing Saincte Warburgh crossyng the Ford. Then a mickle strong Manne, in armour, carried a huge anlace; after whom came six claryons and Minstrels, who sang the Song of Saincte Warburgh; then came Master Maior, mounted on a white Horse, dight with sable Trappying, wrought about by the Nunnes of Saincte Kenna with gould and silver. Next followed the "Eldermen and Cittie Broders" all fitly mounted and caparisoned; and after them a procession of priests and friars, also singing St Warburgh's Song. "In thilk Manner reechyng the Brydge, the Manne with the anlace stode on the fyrst Top of a Mound, yreed in the midst of the Bridge; then went up the Manne with the sheelde, after him the Minstrels and Clarions; and then the Preestes and Freeres, all in white Albs, makyng a most goodlie shewe; the Maior and Eldermen standyng round, theie sang, with the sound of Clarions, the Song of Saincte Baldwyn: which beyng done, the Manne on the Top threwe with greet myght his anlace into the see, and the Clarions sounded an auintiant charge and Forloyn: then theie sang againe the Songe of Saincte Warburgh, and proceeded up Chryst's Hill to the Cross, where a Latin Sermon was preached by Ralph de Blundeville. And with sound of clarion theie agayne went to the Brydge, and there dined; spendyng the rest of the Daie in Sportes and Plaies: the Freeres of Saincte Augustine doeyng the Plaie of the Knyghtes of Bristowe, making a greet Fire at Night on Kynwulph Hyll."

This bit of supposed antiquity caused a considerable sensation in the town. It had been brought to the printing-office by a stranger,

and it was only on his return with another communication of a similar character that his identity was discovered. Catcott, to whom the narrative was doubly interesting on account of his recent exploit, had made eager inquiries about the source from which it came, and was no doubt confirmed in his belief in Rowley by finding that this wonderful piece of narrative proceeded from the same inexhaustible stores. The boy appears to have been rather roughly handled by the printing-house people. "His age and appearance altogether precluded the idea of his being the author;" and when peremptorily questioned as to where he got it, he drew back within himself, and became as obstinate as his questioners were surly. It was only when they softened, and begged for the information which he alone could afford, that he yielded. He gave the same reply that he had already done to Catcott and Burgum—that this was one of the many MSS. which his father had taken from the munitment-room at Redcliffe Church. At the very same time, however, he showed to a certain John Rudhall, one of his comrades, with boyish imprudence, the process by which he prepared his parchments and imitated the ancient writing. No doubt the publication of this scrap of history gave fresh energy to his dealings with Barrett, whom he served in the strangest way, humouring his longing for original documents, and inventing, as he went along, with a miraculous appropriateness to the need of the moment, which one would think must have excited some suspicion in the mind of the historian. Authorities do not generally drop down from heaven upon a writer exactly when he wants them in this lavish way. But no doubt seems to have crossed the mind of the antiquary. "No one surely ever had such good fortune as myself," he cried many years after ecstatically, "in procuring MSS. and ancient deeds to help

me in investigating the history and antiquities of this city." It does not seem ever to have occurred to the self-absorbed compiler that there was anything remarkable in the fact of the lad Chatterton being able to decipher and identify such documents, even had his possession of them been fully explained. He took everything for granted with the most admirable imbecility, and made the fullest use of them, as will be seen from the following account of his work, which we quote from Dr Wilson :—

"If the reader turn from the biographer's pages to those of the historian and antiquary of Bristol, for information about William Canynge the elder, merchant and mayor of Bristol in the age of Chaucer, when Edward III. and his grandson Richard reigned; or for the facts concerning the younger Canynges of the times of the Roses; of Sir Symon de Byrtonne, Sir Baldwin Fulford, or even of the good priest Rowley,—he suddenly finds himself involved in the most ludicrous perplexities. Mr Barrett was, in earlier days, an undoubted believer in Rowley, and continued to welcome with unquestioning credulity the apt discoveries which were ever rewarding the researches of Chatterton among the old parchments purloined by his father from Redcliffe Church. Did the historian attempt to follow up his first chapter of British and Roman Bristol, with its Roman camps, roads, and coins, by a second, treating in like manner of Saxon and Norman Bristol, his meagre data are forthwith augmented by the discovery of an account by Turgot, a Saxon ecclesiastic, who lived not long after the time assigned by Camden for the origin of the city, 'Of ancient coynes found at and near Bristowe, with the hystorie of the fyrst coynynge, by the Saxones, done from the Saxon ynto Englyshe, by T. Rowlie.' From the same voracious pen follows an account of 'Mayster Canynge, hys cabinet of auntyaunte monuments;' the same being a wondrous library and antiquarian museum of Bristol in the days of Henry VI. Did Leland fail the historian, painfully assiduous in researches into early ecclesiastical foundations: an old MS. of Rowley fortunately turns up, with valuable notes on St Baldwin's Chapelle in Baldwin's Street; the Chapelle of St

Mary Magdalen, in the time of Earl Goodwyne; Seyncte Austin's Chapelle, with its 'aunciauntrie and nice carvellynge;' and other equally curious and apocryphal edifices.

"So it is throughout the volume."

It seems to have been only when he had thus fully convinced all the authorities round him—and of course such men as the Catcotts and Barrett were, till he saw through them, great men to the attorney's apprentice, the charity-boy and descendant of gravediggers—that Chatterton began to dream of fame and fortune. No doubt it must have been every way bad for the boy to fathom so speedily, and find out the narrowness and meanness of the only people he had to look up to. When he perceived with his clear eyes how utterly deceivable they were and yet how selfish, taking from him what they wanted without any attempt to help him, or the slightest appreciation of his powers, it is not wonderful if the natural impulse of arrogant youth to despise its pottering commonplace seniors, grew stronger and more bitter within him. He took these small luminaries as a type of the critics and teachers of the world—as indeed, to a certain extent, they were—and trimmed his pinions to a loftier flight. As he had taken in the wiseacres at home, no doubt he could take in the others outside the little world of Bristol, and make a stepping-stone of them, and dash forth upon a universe where surely—grand final hope which represents some faith still in an ideal human nature—somebody was to be found who would know what all those hieroglyphics meant, and decipher the strange language and hail the new poet. There is the strangest mixture of simplicity and cunning, belief in the credulity of others, and pathetic credulity on his own part, in Chatterton's first attempt upon the larger world. He wrote to Dodsley the publisher, offering "several ancient poems, and an interlude, perhaps the oldest dramatic

work extant, wrote by one Rowley, a priest in Bristol, who lived in the reigns of Henry VI. and Edward IV." Receiving no answer to this letter, after an interval of two months he wrote again, a pitiful epistle, giving an account of the tragedy of "Ella," and asking for "one guinea to enable him to procure permission to copy it." Poor boy! The extreme poverty to which one guinea is a matter of importance has something pathetic in it, which drops a merciful veil over those little meannesses, by none more bitterly felt than by those compelled to do them, which need produces. Whether he received any answer at all to this painful application there is no way of knowing. But shortly after, he made another and more dignified effort. Horace Walpole, who is so well known to us all—a man of much greater calibre than the Catcotts and Barrett, yet who probably in the same circumstances would have been as easily deceived, and as little conscious of Chatterton's real qualities as they—was, at the distance from which alone the Bristol boy could regard such a potentate, as a god among men. Distance, alas! has an immense deal to do with many reputations. A vague dilated idea of the noble gentleman, who, though already in the highest place which fortune could bestow, yet condescended to write, to take an interest in art, and to bestow a glorious patronage upon its professors, was the young poet's conception of the *dilettante* of Strawberry Hill. He was a patron worth having—a man whose notice would open an entire world of honour and gladness to the ardent boy. He too, even, had sinned, if it could be called sin, in the same splendid way. Chatterton was Rowley; but was not Walpole the Baron of Otranto, able to understand all these quaint delights of antiquity, half simulated, half real—to see through the disguise, and recognise the real poet? Such,

no doubt, was the poor lad's dream—and such a dream has aroused, one time or another, every poetical youthful imagination. A sudden exhilaration seems to have filled his mind when this project dawned upon him. He could not, would not, doubt its success. "He would often speak in great raptures of the undoubted success of his plan for future life," says his sister. "His ambition increased daily. His spirits were rather uneven, sometimes so gloomed that for days together he would say but very little, and apparently by constraint; at other times exceedingly cheerful. When in spirits he would enjoy his rising fame: confident of advancement, he would promise my mother and me that we should be partakers of his success."

Strangely enough, however, this pure impulse to seek a higher sphere and a patron more likely to comprehend him, was carried out by another of those amazing fictions to which his mind had grown familiar. He approached Walpole not as a young poet seeking to make himself known, nor even as the discoverer of a poet, but with a long, quaint, very absurd, and, to our eyes, very transparent account of a multitude of medieval painters, immortalised by Rowley, which might be used (he suggests) in a future edition of Walpole's 'Anecdotes of Painting'! Nothing more daring than this sudden creation of a Bristol school of painters, as numerous as the Umbrian or Venetian, and to all appearance quite as distinguished, could be conceived; and it shows the wonderful simplicity of the poor boy, and his unconsciousness of the fact that history did exist independent of Rowley, and that his wonderful statement could be put to its test. In the note which accompanied this extraordinary production he introduced himself to Walpole as a brother *dilettante*. "Being versed a little in antiquities, I have met with several curi-

ous MSS.," he says. No doubt this mode of approaching the great man seemed to the youth the perfection of craft and prudence; and when he received in return a courtly letter, complimenting him upon his learning, his urbanity, and politeness, and couched in the terms due from one stately student to another, it is not wonderful if he felt his hopes almost realised. The poor boy wrote again, not abandoning his grandiloquent pretences as to Rowley, but bursting into a little personal history as well. He told his splendid correspondent that he was "the son of a poor widow who supported him with great difficulty; that he was still an apprentice to an attorney, but had a taste or turn for more elegant studies; and hinted a wish," says Walpole, who is our only authority as to the words of this letter, "that I would assist him with my interest in emerging out of so dull a profession by procuring him some place in which he could pursue his natural bent." With this letter Chatterton enclosed no more nonsense about painters, but several of the Rowley poems, and awaited the result with, it is too easy to imagine, a beating heart.

The result was such as might have been anticipated. The courteous reception of a doubtful antiquity from a brother virtuoso, which involved nothing more than civility and a learned correspondence, was one thing; but to take bodily upon one's shoulders the charge of an uneducated and penniless lad, with a fardel of very suspicious MSS., was a totally different matter. Our friend Horace was taken much aback. He had no way of knowing that it was a matter of life and death to his correspondent; and even had he done so, it is doubtful whether he would have thought the despair of a Bristol apprentice anything like so important as his own comfort and equanimity. But he was still courteous, even kind in his way. He submitted the poems to Gray

and Mason, whose opinion against their genuineness was stronger than his own, and he wrote very civilly to the young unfortunate. "I undeceived him," he says, "about my being a person of interest, and urged him that in duty and gratitude to his mother, who had straitened herself to breed him up to a profession, he ought to labour in it that in her old age he might absolve the filial debt. I told him that when he should have made a fortune, he might unbend himself with the studies consonant to his inclinations." Pitiless words! yet not meant badly by the fine gentleman, to whom, no doubt, it appeared quite possible that a budding attorney might one day make some kind of dirty little fortune. Poor Chatterton, stinging and tingling in every vein, yet keeping his temper with a miraculous effort, replied in defence of his MSS., upon which his correspondent had thrown a doubt. "I am not able to dispute with a person of your character," cries the poor boy, who, even in this bitter moment, cannot refrain from some circumstantial fibbing about his Rowley, whose productions he copied, he says, "from a transcript in the hands of a gentleman who is assured of their authenticity." But he concludes with a burst of indignant but not undignified feeling. "Though I am but sixteen years of age, I have lived long enough to see that poverty attends literature. I am obliged to you, sir, for your advice, and will go a little beyond it, by destroying all my useless lumber of literature, and never using my pen again but in the law."

Poor hot-headed disappointed boy! no doubt there were bitter tears in his eyes as he wrote these words, so full of indignant meaning, so real in feeling, and yet so impossible. Twice after he had to apply to Walpole for the return of his MSS., Horace having gone to Paris to enjoy himself for six weeks in the mean time, and forgotten all

about his petitioner. They were finally returned without a word to apologise for the delay. And thus ended poor Chatterton's dream—the only project with any real foundation to it which had yet entered his fertile brain.

But yet it would be cruel to impute any serious blame to Walpole. Advice is an unpalatable substitute for warm support and championship; but there was no reason why he should accept the task of setting up this boy in the world, and making a career for him. No doubt he was sorry afterwards if it ever occurred to him that his repulse had anything to do with Chatterton's fate. But we cannot believe that it had actually anything to do with it. The boy's energies were quite fresh and unbroken, and the sting of a great disappointment is quite as often a spur as a discouraging blow. Probably the cutting off of his hopes had something to do with the sharp and angry satires produced during his last year in Bristol, and which seem to have been chiefly directed against his friends. One of these, Mr Catcott the pewterer, received his castigation in such a Christian spirit, or rather with such unexampled vanity, as to annotate and preserve it, evidently with an idea that fame is fame, and that to be celebrated in satiric verse is better than not to be celebrated at all. But his brother the clergyman, with whom Chatterton had become intimate, received it in quite another fashion, and broke off all intercourse with the rash boy—a fact which would seem to have startled him—the first punishment of his unsparing ridicule. By this time he seems to have become very well known in Bristol. He had a bowing acquaintance, his sister tells us, with almost all the young men; and his strange ways, his fits of silence, his abstruse occupations, and no doubt in such an age his unusual temperance, made him an object of some wonder to the common crowd. He was like

nobody else in that little world. He was known to be already a man of letters, contributing to the newspapers and magazines; and that of itself was foundation enough upon which to attribute to him all manner of oddity. Wondering looks followed as he went on his dreamy way from Mr Lambert's house to his office—from the office to his mother's humble little dwelling. That was the utmost extent of his locomotion on week-days; but on Sunday he made expeditions into the country, and would bring home drawings of village churches which had taken his fancy; or beguiling a half-reluctant companion to the river-side, would throw himself down on the grass and read to him, probably to the great bewilderment of his faculties, one of Rowley's poems; or in a gayer mood would join the gay crowd in the public promenade, where the girls went to show their finery. He had many friends among those "girls," the pretty blossoms of their generation, who perhaps were less hard upon him than wiser folk—and wrote verses to them, and promised to write them letters when he went away; but these friendships were such that he could send his messages to them through his mother—a harmless mode of correspondence.

These are the higher lights of Chatterton's life. But all this time it must be remembered that the lad who had been permitted to discuss theology with the clerical Catcott, and give information to the antiquarian Barrett—who had corresponded with Walpole, and seen himself in print in a London magazine—and who had formed a thousand dreams more splendid than any reality—was still the bedfellow of Mr Lambert's footboy, eating his spare meals in Mr Lambert's kitchen with the maids, and with no place of refuge from these companions except in the office, where sometimes Mr Lambert himself would appear furious, seizing upon his cherished labours, and scatter-

ing the floor with the fragments of his lost poetry. He was boarded and clothed by this harsh employer, but had not a penny even to provide himself with paper, except the chance half-crowns which Barrett or Catcott bestowed upon him for his MSS. If he was "moody and uneven in spirits," what wonder? With such associates round him continually, it would have been strange if he had not been subject to "fits of absence." And as he grew and developed, the yoke became more and more irksome. He was apprenticed to Mr Lambert for seven years, only two of which were gone, and to get free was the object of his constant longing. He would run away, he said, in despair, in the evening hours which he spent at home, and which were often spent, no doubt, in those anxious pleadings with him for patience on the part of the troubled women, and wild complaints on his side, which are unfortunately so common. One knows the very arguments the poor mother would use, praying her impatient boy, with tears in her eyes, to put up with it a little longer. What was to become of him?—what was to become of them all if he threw away this only certain sustenance? There are few of us who have not seen such scenes; but not many discontented boys nowadays have such foundation as had poor Chatterton, thus beset on every side, and shut out from any possible consolation or even privacy in his life.

It is hard to say whether the accident which cut short his bondage was the result of careful arrangement on his part, or if it was simply chance; probably a little of both. There is a mixture of levity and reality in the strange document called his will, which seems to bring before us too clearly for any artifice the workings of the strange doublemind—one all school-

boy insolence, the other deepening into a pathetic sense of all the mysteries of life—which inspired the lad. This curious production begins with satirical addresses to his friends Burgum and Catcott in verse, and breaking off abruptly with a reference to the usual burial-place of suicides, continues thus:—

"This is the last Will and Testament of me, Thomas Chatterton, of the City of Bristol; being sound in body, or it is the fault of my last surgeon. The soundness of my mind the Coroner and Jury are to be judges of, desiring them to take notice, that the most perfect masters of human nature in Bristol distinguish me by the title of the Mad Genius; therefore if I do a mad action, it is conformable to every action of my life, which all savoured of insanity.

"Item, If after my death, which will happen to-morrow night before eight o'clock, being the Feast of the Resurrection, the Coroner and Jury bring it in lunacy, I will and direct that Paul Farr, Esq., and Mr John Flower, at their joint expense, cause my body to be interred in the tomb of my fathers, and raise the monument over my body to the height of four feet five inches, placing the present flat stone on the top, and adding six tableta.

"On the *first*, to be engraved in Old English characters—

"Vous qui par ici passez
Pur l'ame Guateroine Chatterton priez;
Le Cors di oi ici gist,
L'ame receyve Thu Crist.—MCCX.

"On the *second* tablet, in Old English characters—

"Orate pro animabus Alanus Chatterton, et Alicia Uxeris ejus, qui quidem Alanus obiit X. die mensis Novemb. MCCCCXV., quorum animabus propineatur Deus. Amen.*

"On the *third* tablet, in Roman characters—

"Sacred to the Memory of
THOMAS CHATTERTON,
Subchaunter of the Cathedral of this city, whose ancestors were residents of St Mary Redcliffe since the year 1140. He died the 7th of August 1752.

"On the *fourth* tablet, in Roman characters—

* The French and Latin are given as Chatterton wrote them.

"To the Memory of
THOMAS CHATTERTON.

Reader, judge not : if thou art a Christian, believe that he shall be judged by a superior Power ; to that Power alone is he now answerable."

This wonderful jumble of the imaginary and true, fictitious ancestors and but too real father and son, is not more remarkable than the sudden drop in a moment from the false levity of all that precedes it to the touching and pathetic words which have since been inscribed on Chatterton's monument—a momentary gleam of the better and truer soul. The will then relapses into satire, as the boy bequeaths his "vigour and fire of youth," his humility, his modesty, his spirit and disinterestedness, his powers of utterance and his free-thinking, to various of his friends, patrons, and enemies in Bristol. Then he pauses, with once more a recollection of something better, to make a kind of apology to the Catcotts for his sins against them. "I have an unlucky way of railing, and when the strong fit of satire is upon me I spare neither friend nor foe," says the poor fool of genius, divided between real regret for his cruelties, and a certain sense that it is a fine thing to have talents and impulses which are too strong to be resisted. "I leave all my debts," he concludes, "the whole not five pounds, to the payment of the generous Chamber of Bristol. . . . I leave my mother and sister to the protection of my friends, if I have any. Executed in the presence of Omniscience, the 14th of April 1770." This wonderful melange of flippancy and solemnity is endorsed as follows: "All this wrote between eleven and two o'clock, Saturday, in the utmost distress of mind." Poor boy! wearing his charlatan habit with such a tragic truthfulness! He meant it every word, and yet he meant it not. He was playing with that cold-gleaming remorseless weapon of death; touching the axe with his finger, jesting over it, shooting sharp shafts under cover

of its presence, and laughing at the twinges of his victims; yet wondering, wondering all the time when the moment came how it would feel.

He left this composition, written, as most of his productions were, in a copy-book, upon his desk; and by chance or by design it fell into Mr Lambert's hands. The attorney had been already scared by another trick of the same kind, and was too much alarmed any longer to run the risk of finding a dead drudge in his office some day instead of a living one. His alarm was so great that we are told the indentures were immediately cancelled, and the dangerous apprentice dismissed. He was as glad to be rid of Lambert as Lambert must have been to get rid of him; and went back to his mother, carrying trouble and consternation into the dressmaker's humble household, but full of confidence himself. "Would you have me stay here and starve?" he asked, when the weeping women tried to dissuade him from his project of going to London; and then he chattered to them of the great future that was coming, and of all the grandeur he would surround them with. He talked away their fears, or at least talked them silent—no rare occurrence; for here again is no exceptional feature in a poet's life, but one of the perennial chances of humanity—the confident boy, fearing nothing, eager to dash into the fight and dare all its perils—the older, sadder souls that have themselves been wounded in the battle, weeping, doubting, deprecating, and yet not without a feeling in their hearts that for him an exception may be made which goes against all experience, and that such bright hope and courage and confidence cannot altogether fail.

And in this moment of necessity his friends stepped in to help. They made up a purse for him to pay his expenses to London and give him a start in his new career. The amount is not known, and pro-

bably was not very great; but it was enough to send the boy away in the highest spirits, in the basket and afterwards on the top of the coach, where he "rid easy," as he writes to his mother. He wrote the first morning after his arrival a long letter with a complete itinerary of his journey. He had got into London at five in the evening on the 25th of April, and had at once proceeded to visit the booksellers with whom he had already some kind of connection, through his contributions to the *Town and Country* and other magazines. He had, he says, "great encouragement from them all; all approved of my design." He had seen various relations in London and had received a kindly welcome; and altogether was in high hope and excitement, feeling himself on the verge of a brilliant fate.

Chatterton established himself in lodgings in Shoreditch—a curious locality, considering all the fine company which he immediately declared himself to be keeping. So far as personal comfort went he would not seem to have much improved by the change, for again we find he shared his room with a nephew of his landlady's, a young plasterer, whose peace must have been strangely disturbed by his new bedfellow. "He used to sit up almost all night in writing and reading," says the plasterer's sister; "and her brother said he was afraid to lie with him, for to be sure he was a spirit and never slept; for he never came to bed till it was morning, and then, for what he saw, never closed his eyes." And, however late he had been, he invariably got up when the young workman did, between five and six. The same feverish restlessness seems to have distinguished him through all the remainder of his brief life. His letters are like the utterance of a man in a breathless hurry. He is writing this and that—he is sought for here and there. Wilkes is anxious to see him; Beck-

ford the mayor is going to make his fortune. He knows all the wits at the coffee-houses; he meant to have called on the Duke of Bedford, but could not, as he was ill. All these startling intimations of exalted fortune hurry from his pen as if he had no time to take breath. And he must indeed, during the first month he spent in London, have been busy enough, though not to much profit. He had papers in the '*Middlesex Journal*,' the '*Freeholders' Magazine*,' the '*Town and Country Magazine*,' the '*Annual Register*,' and even the '*Gospel Magazine*' received contributions from him, "for a whim" as he tells the anxious watchers at home. "I get four guineas a-month by one magazine," he wrote a fortnight after his arrival, "and shall engage to write a History of England and other pieces, which will more than double that sum. Occasional essays for the daily papers will more than support me. What a glorious prospect!" He promises his sister "two silks during the summer," she has only to choose the colours; and does manage somehow or other to send his mother a box containing a half-dozen cups and saucers, two fans, and some British herb snuff for his grandmother—a touching proof of the boy's tender thought of his own people, the humble, simple, anxious family who were rejoicing with trembling in the little Bristol house.

Amid all this big talk, however, he allows himself to complain, in a letter to his sister, that the political essays or letters which he had begun to write did not pay. It was the age of Junius, and the ambitious boy had set himself up as a kind of rival to Junius under the title of Decimus. But he found that "essays on the patriotic side fetch no more than what the copy is sold for," and that on the other side they fetch nothing at all. "You must pay to have them printed," he says with curious shrewdness, "but then you seldom lose by it." "If

money flowed as fast on me as honours," he adds, "I would give you a portion of £5000." There does not seem to have been any foundation for all these boasts; yet the brag which was made to keep up the spirits of his mother and sister, and conceal from them his privations, surely deserves to be called at least a pious fraud, and must not be too sharply criticised. He kept up the farce almost to the end, describing himself on the 20th July, only a month before his death, as having "a universal acquaintance: my company is courted everywhere; and could I humble myself to go into a compter, could have had twenty places before now; but I must be among the great: State matters suit me better than commercial," says the boy, in what must have been the half-delirious self-assertion of a spirit approaching the final margin of despair. A little later he tries to obtain a recommendation from Mr Barrett for a situation as surgeon in a ship going to Africa, a wonderful practical contradiction to his boasts which must have confused the minds of his friends. Barrett refused to give it, as was natural. And then the darkness seems to have closed in around the unhappy lad. The last visible sign we have of him in this world is a letter to Catcott, mostly about the architecture of Redcliffe Church, and the improvement of the Bristol streets. "Heaven send you the comforts of Christianity; I request them not, for I am no Christian," he says. These are almost his last words out of the gathering shadows. They are dated the 12th August, but twelve days before his death; but not a word is in them to lead to the inference that the writer's heart and hopes were failing, that he was nearly at the end of all his devices, beginning to starve among strangers. Shortly before this he had changed his lodging, for no reason that is told to us, but probably that he might hide his growing

poverty, the beginning of utter want and destitution, from people who knew him. A relative of his own lived in the house in Shoreditch, and must have found out his privations—and the poor proud boy preferred to hide his misery and suffer alone.

There is little to be learned about his last days. He had stolen away like a wounded animal to hide what he had to bear. For the first time in his life he had his poor room to himself. It was in the dusky neighbourhood of Holborn, in the midst of the fullest din of London, and nobody who knew him was near to win the unhappy one back to hope. He had written night and day, using all his young strong faculties to the utmost, dispensing with sleep and food and all the ordinary supports of mortal men; and this, no doubt, had undermined his health, so that despair had so much the easier mastery of him when, after valiantly fighting the wolf at the door for four long months, it at last broke in. The publishers, according to his own calculation, were owing him eleven pounds—enough to give so frugal a being bread for some time to come; but he could not get the money that was owing to him, and that bitter doubt and distrust of man which lay in the depths of his nature broke forth in full force, adding a double pang to his other sufferings. With that horrible doubt and sense of wrong came the pride which is their natural companion. Humble overtures of kindness made by the humble people about him, who saw that the boy was starving, were rejected with scorn. Once only the pretence of an oyster-supper tempted him to eat in the house of a kind apothecary in his new neighbourhood. This, it is supposed, was his last meal. When his landlady begged him to share her dinner with her in the last awful days, the poor boy, mad with hunger and despair, resented the Chris-

tian charity. He kept himself all alone "a prisoner in his room" with such thoughts as only the eye of God could see. Between the unhappy child (not eighteen) in his despair, and those tenderest, most pitiful, all-comprehending eyes of the Father in heaven, it is not fit that any man should interpose his vain judgment. On the 24th of August the boy's fortitude or his mind gave way. It is possible that he had the poison in readiness for some such emergency, or else that he staggered forth, all weak and ghastly, to get it when nature could bear no more. It was arsenic, mixed with water, we are told, which was the means of death he chose. Next morning, when the frightened people of the house broke open his door, he lay among a thousand fragments of the papers he had torn up wildly before dying, in all his young beauty, the bright eyes dim, the strong limbs powerless, like a young oak-tree felled, while all its strength was yet to come. This was the end of his struggles, his indomitable courage, his wild tender boastings of good fortune which had never been. "The sleepless soul had perished in its pride." The great career which ought to have been was annulled for ever.

We have not attempted any criticism of Dr Wilson's careful and sympathetic study of this short sad life. The ground has been often gone over, but never with more painstaking labour or truer feeling; and this book is not burdened, as are almost all others on the same subject, with elaborate discussions about the comparative wickedness of literary forgeries, or the forgotten arguments of the Rowley controversy. Dr Wilson's interest is with his hero—to whom he has ren-

dered the calm yet generous justice which is scarcely ever attained by contemporaries, or even by critics of the generation immediately following—and not with mere literary discussions or *dilettante* arguments.

We have refrained, too, from the Rowley controversy, and also from the Rowley poems, as things of inferior and temporary moment in comparison with the story of their author. The first is dead, as all such absurd discussions must come to be as soon as remorseless Time has laid his hand upon them. The poems, if not dead, are sadly buried under the rubbish of artificial antiquity with which it pleased their author to encumber them. Underneath are to be found rich tints of beauty and power, the scatterings of a splendid and prodigal genius; but we have no space to enter into criticism. We are told, in all Chatterton's earlier memoirs, with the unfailing set moral of the eighteenth century, that had he but waited a while all would have been well with him. Did not Dr Fry of St John's College, Cambridge, go to Bristol very shortly after to investigate into the Rowley poems and their discoverer? "Poor Chatterton! he might have grown to be a perfect man, and become a happy poet and a Christian philosopher," says one of his anonymous biographers. But, after all, there is nothing certain in Dr Fry nor in the justice of the world; and the only conclusion we have the heart to put to this saddest chapter of literary history, is that which he himself appointed to be placed over his grave: "Reader, judge not. If thou art a Christian, believe that he shall be judged by a superior Power: to that Power alone is he now answerable." There is nothing more to be said.

BLUE LAWS.

THOUGH the world — especially that part of it which speaks English — must, according to all present appearance, resign itself, as best it may, to the government of mere numbers, there is no reason why the minority should worship the majority, or extol its decrees as the perfection of wisdom. *Vox populi, vox Dei*, never was a true saying, and never will be, unless the multitudes become very much wiser and less selfish than they have ever yet shown themselves, in any part of the world, since the beginning of time. The voice of the people was for Barabbas, not for Jesus. ‘Punch and Judy’ is a more attractive performance to our masters — ‘the masses’ — than ‘Hamlet’ or ‘Macbeth’; and if the whole world were counted, Christianity itself would be found to be in a minority as compared with Mohammedanism or Buddhism. There is sometimes a chance under the rule of a single despot that the many may escape oppression — for a despot may be mild, equitable, and conscientious; but mere majorities, however much it may be in our day the fashion to defer to them, are often very virulent and unjust, and, worst defect of all, are either wholly unendowed with a conscience, or, possessing a conscience, consider it their duty to consign to the stake or the scaffold all the wiser people who disagree with them. And when a minority that has ever been persecuted or savagely treated finds itself, in the course of time and by the progress of events, converted into a majority, it is very apt to better the lessons which it has been taught in the days of its tribulation, and do to others even worse than it has been done by. All history is full of the struggles and sufferings of minorities, and of the insolent oppression of majorities, and will probably continue to be so until the

happy days, which Dr Cumming expects to see so soon, when the lion shall lie down with the lamb, and when men, studying war no more, shall turn their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning-hooks, and every one shall be as wise as Solomon, and as innocent as Adam on the day of his creation.

In England and America, immediately after the Reformation had gone through its first phases, the tyranny of majorities took a turn that was mainly religious, and to a smaller extent political. The Puritans, at one time in a minority, suffered, there can be no denial of the fact, a great amount of injustice for conscience’ sake, and made the world their debtors for very much of the subsequent liberty which it has enjoyed; but they nevertheless, when it came to their turn to be in the majority, inflicted upon their opponents fully as much persecution as they themselves had endured. They had their first great triumph in England and their second in America, and in both countries did their utmost to draw upon themselves not only the hatred but the ridicule of the non-Puritanic community. But though they might incur ridicule, it was impossible, in those who suffered from their ascendancy, to despise people with such fiery zeal, and such grim and disagreeable earnestness as they manifested in all their dealings with their opponents. Lord Macaulay, in a well-known passage of his History, very graphically describes their doings in Old England, before New England was handed over to their mercies:—

“Against the lighter vices the ruling faction waged war with a zeal little tempered by humanity or by common sense. Sharp laws were passed against betting. It was enacted that adultery

should be punished with death. The illicit intercourse of the sexes, even where neither violence nor seduction was imputed, where no public scandal was given, where no conjugal right was violated, was made a misdemeanour. Public amusements, from the masques which were exhibited at the mansions of the great down to the wrestling matches and grinning matches on village greens, were vigorously attacked. One ordinance directed that all the May-poles in England should forthwith be hewn down. Another proscribed all theatrical diversions. The playhouses were to be dismantled, the spectators fined, the actors whipped at the cart's tail. Rope - dancing, puppet - shows, bowls, horse-racing, were regarded with no friendly eye. But bear-baiting, then a favourite diversion of high and low, was the abomination which most strongly stirred the wrath of the austere sectaries. It is to be remarked that their antipathy to this sport had nothing in common with the feeling which has, in our own time, induced the Legislature to interfere for the purpose of protecting beasts against the wanton cruelty of men. *The Puritan hated bear-baiting, not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectators.* Indeed he generally contrived to enjoy the double pleasure of tormenting both spectators and bear."

When the reaction against Puritanism in England had set in so strongly as to threaten to bring about the persecution of the persecutors, these sturdy zealots be-thought themselves of the New World, whither many of their co-religionists had long preceded them. They resolved, when they could no longer have their own way at home, to shake the dust of their native land from their feet, and try their fortune on that new soil where they were unlikely to find any other enemies than the savages and the wild animals of the forest. So, packing up their worldly goods, and by no means forgetting to carry their intolerance along with them, they settled in various swarms upon the rugged shores of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island, and resolved to govern themselves on principles more thoroughly theocratic than had ever been brought into practice since

the days when the Jews grew weary of the strict discipline of the prophet Samuel, and resolved to have a king to rule over them like other nations. They applied the laws given by Moses to the Jews in the wilderness to a people who were not Jews, and who were not passing through the wilderness towards a promised land, but who already possessed another Land of Promise, and had been nurtured in a very different kind of civilisation from that of the Pentateuch.

These laws, far more Judaical than Christian, had been in operation, socially more than legally, in New England for several years, when, in 1646, it was resolved by the General Court of Connecticut, of which the jurisdiction included a wider range than the present limits of that State, to make a collection of all the laws then in force that differed in any respect from the laws of England, and that they should be revised, digested, and incorporated into one code. Mr Roger Ludlow of Hartford, one of the magistrates of the colony, was intrusted with the task. He spent four years over it, laboured very industriously, and in 1650 presented the code to the General Court, which approved of it as the Law of the Connecticut Colonies. This code remained in operation until 1686, when Sir Edward Andros, the new Governor sent out by King James II., suspended the Charter of the Colony, as well as the Puritanic laws, and for a time re-established the laws of England.

The laws so codified by Roger Ludlow were the famous "Blue Laws." The Americans, always happy in the bestowal of nicknames, gave them this appellation in derision, and it has adhered to them too tightly to be ever shaken off. The phrase was suggested by the old English phrase of "the blues," and "blue-devils," and the common vulgarity "to look blue," under sorrow, disappointment, or calamity. These Blue Laws were of five kinds—general, theological,

municipal, commercial, and personal. It is only the latter that offer any peculiarity, or that need any description; for the former kinds were mainly of the same character as the laws of all civilised countries of the time, and were closely founded upon the written and unwritten laws of England. Their whole gist and purpose were summarised in one significant paragraph by Roger Ludlow:—

"It is therefore ordered by this courte, and by the authority thereof, that noe man's life shall bee taken away; that noe man's honor or good name shall be stained; that noe man's person shall be arrested, restrained, bannished, dismembered, nor in any way punished; that noe man shall be deprived of his wife or children; that noe man's goods or estate shall be taken away from him, nor any ways endamaged, under color of law or countenance of authority, unless it bee by the virtue or equity of some express law of the country warranting the same, established by a generall courte and sufficiently published; or, in case of the defect of a law in any particular case, by the Word of God."

By "the Word of God" the Puritans meant the Old Testament rather than the New, as will appear from the sanguinary severity of their enactments against offences which the New Testament would have treated more leniently, and as contrasted with the charity and mercy exhibited by the Saviour to the woman taken in adultery. The adulterer and the adulteress were both to be put to death, and even the incorrigible Sabbath-breaker was to be subjected to the same penalty, though we believe there is no instance on record of its having been inflicted. A few extracts from this by no means Christian code will show alike the spirit of the Blue Laws and the authority upon which they were founded.

"I. If any man, after legall conviction, shall have or worship any other god but the Lord God, *hee shall bee put to death* (Deut. xiii. 6; xvii. 2; Exod. xxii. 20)."

"III. If any man shall blaspheme the name of God the Father, Sonne, or

Holy Ghost, with direct, express, presumptuous, or high-handed blasphemy, or shall curse any one in the like manner, *hee shall bee put to death* (Lev. xxiv. 15, 16)."

"VIII. If any person committeth adultery with a married or espoused wife, *the adulterer and the adulteress shall bee surely put to death* (Lev. xx. 10; and xviii. 20)."

"X. If any man stealeth a man or mankinde, *hee shall bee put to death* (Exod. xxi. 16).

"XI. If any man rise up by false witness, willingly and of purpose, to take away any man's life, *he shall bee put to death* (Deut. xix. 16)."

"XIII. If any childe or children above sixteen yeares old, and of sufficient understanding, shall curse or smite his or their naturall father or mother, *hee or they shall bee put to death*, unless it can bee sufficiently testified that the parents have beene very unchristianly negligent in the education of such children, as to provoke them by extreme and cruell correction, that they have been forced thereunto to preserve themselves from death (or) maiming (Exod. xxi. 17-25; Lev.)

"XIV. If any man have a stubborn and rebellious sonne of sufficient yeares and understanding—viz., sixteen yeares of age—which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that, when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them, then may his father and mother, being his naturall parents, lay hold on him, and bring him to the magistrates assembled in courte, and testifie there that their sonne is stubborn and rebellious, and will not obey their voice and chastisement, but lives in sundry notorious crimes, *such a sonne shall bee put to death* (Deut. xx.)"

As regards penalties that were not capital, for minor offences the Blue Laws pressed very heavily on the right of private judgment. The Old Puritans, though enemies of drunkenness and excess, were by no means disinclined to allow either a rich man or a poor man a fair modicum of good liquor, if his head were hard enough and his stomach capacious enough to bear it. It was ordered, for instance, that no inn-keeper should allow any of his guests or customers to drink excessively; that is to say, above half a pint of wine for one person at one time; or, to continue tippling for

above half an hour together; or tipping at all, "after nine of the clock in the evening." The penalty for drunkenness was ten shillings—a large sum in those days. If a person were thrice fined for drunkenness, a whipping was to be substituted for the fine on all subsequent occasions, accompanied by a public exhibition in the stocks.

Lying, as distinguished from perjury, was punished severely in all persons above the age of fourteen years, especially if the lies they told were injurious to the public weal, or to the character of any particular person. A fine of ten shillings was imposed for the first offence; for the second, twenty shillings, or a whipping on the naked body; for the third, forty shillings, or an extra allowance of stripes; and so on in a continually increasing proportion, both of money penalty and physical pain.

Smoking was not in favour among the Blue Law givers. It was ordered that no person under the age of twenty-one years, nor any other (however old) who had not already accustomed himself to the use of tobacco, should be permitted to smoke or snuff or chew, unless he brought a certificate from a physician that it was useful for his health. Any one who smoked either in his own house or publicly on the streets, was to be fined sixpence for each offence on the testimony of a single witness. It was ordered also that "such fines should be paid without gainsaying."

This law remained in operation, so far as it applied to smoking in the public streets, until within living memory in the city of Boston and elsewhere, the fine for disobedience having been raised from sixpence to a dollar.

Slander was punished by fine, whipping, and imprisonment. Unchastity in man or woman was punished by whipping through eleven towns. After a time, when it was found that the penalty offended the conscience of the people as being too severe, it was reduced

to whipping through *three* towns only. The Scottish vagrant of a more recent time, who had been whipped through all the towns of Scotland at one period or other of his life, was never whipped in more than one town at a time, and objected most of all to the "lang toon o' Kirkcaldy." Had he added slander to vagrancy in Connecticut, the "lang toon o' Kirkcaldy" might have seemed a desirable place in comparison.

Burglary and highway robbery were treated in a peculiar manner. Any person who committed these crimes was for the first offence to be branded on the forehead with the letter B. For the second offence he was to have a second letter B imprinted indelibly on his front, and to be severely whipped. If he fell into the offence a third time, he was to be put to death as incorrigible. If the first offence were committed on the Lord's Day, the offender, in addition to the branding, was to have one of his ears cut off. If the second offence were in like manner committed on the "Sabbath," the remaining ear was to be cut off.

Contempt of court is an offence in all civilised countries, but it was left to the Puritans to make contempt of a preacher, or of his sermon, a crime to be severely dealt with. It was ordered in the Blue Laws that if any one within the jurisdiction of Connecticut "beare himself contemptuous towards the word preached, or towards 'the messengers of the Lord that are called to disperse the Gospel,' he should for the first offence be publicly and severely whipped by the magistrate, and be bound over for his good behaviour for the second offence, he should be fined of £5 to the public treasury in default "stand forth upon a block of stone, with a high, with a breast, written 'an open and avowed enemy of God's holy Word'."

others might feare and bee ashamed of breaking out into the like wickedness." Under the same clause it was ordered that any person who, without just and necessary cause, withdrew himself from attendance at public worship, should be fined five shillings for every such offence.

The denial of the authenticity or authority of either of the books of the Old or the New Testament—all of which were set forth and enumerated—or the throwing of doubt upon them as the true and infallible word of God, was punishable with banishment for a first, and with death for a second, offence. A Colenso in New England would have suffered martyrdom.

Profane swearing, or the use of imprecations against one's self or any other person, was punishable by a fine of ten shillings. This has been cited as a remarkable instance of lenity on the part of the Puritans, inasmuch as in England the penalty was more severe; and any irreverent allusion to the Deity in a play was punished by a fine of £10. Possibly the Puritans, had they permitted stage plays, would have judged such irreverent allusion to be as fully deserving of death as filial disobedience or other crimes and offences to which they adjudged the same penalty.

The records of many convictions under these laws are still preserved in Connecticut; and in Massachusetts, where a very similar, if not in all respects identical, code was adopted. The worthy Justice Ludlow, to whom was intrusted the task of codification, was shortly after its completion publicly called "Justass Ludlow," by one Captain Stone, to whose taste the laws were too "blue" to be agreeable. For this offence the Captain was fined £100, banished from the colony, and prohibited to return without the Governor's permission, *under pain of death*.

Among other convictions, the following that took place before the trial of Sir Edward Andros and

the establishment of a milder code of government, may serve as specimens of Blue justice:—

Nicholas Taner, servant to Mr Perry, was publicly whipped for being drunk and abusing his master.

Isaiah, Captain Turner's son, was fined £5 for being drunk on the Lord's Day.

William Bromfield was set in the stocks for profaning the Lord's Day, and stealing the wine of Mr Malbon, his master.

David Anderson was publicly whipped for being drunk; and Goodman Leone was whipped and sent out of the plantation, being not only a disorderly person himself, but an encourager of others to be drunk.

George Spenser being profane and disorderly in his whole conversation, and an abettor of others to sin, was whipped and sent out of the plantation; and John Proute, Henry Brazier, and William Bromfield, for joining in a conspiracy with the said Spenser "to carry away the Cock to Virginia," were also sentenced to be whipped, but not banished. Bromfield, being an old offender, was sentenced to "weare irons during the magistrate's pleasure."

Thomas Parsons, servant to Elias Parkmore, was whipped for his sinfull dalliance and folly with Lydia Browne.

John Lobell, the miller, for sinfull dalliance with a little wench of Goodman Hall's, was whipped.

Ruth Acie, a covenant servant to Mr Malbon, was whipped for stubbornness, lying, stealing from her mistress, and yielding to dalliance with William Harding.

Martha Malbon (daughter of Mr Malbon), for consenting to go in the night to a venison-feast with William Harding, and yielding to dalliance with the said Harding, was whipped.

Goodman Hunt and his wife, for keeping the counsels of the said William Harding, baking him a pasty and a plum-cake, and keep-

ing company with him on the Lord's Day, and she suffering Harding to kiss her, were ordered to be sent out of the town within one month—"yea, in a shorter time if any miscarriage (misbehaviour) befond in them." It would be interesting to learn what was the ultimate fate of this Don Giovanni Harding, but the records of the colony are silent on the subject.

Josias Plaistowe, for stealing four baskets of corn from the Indians, was ordered to return them eight baskets, to be fined £5, and hereafter to be called Josias Plaistowe, and not *Mr* Josias Plaistowe as heretofore.

Philip Ratcliffe, a servant to Mr Craddock, being convict of most foul and scandalous tenets against the Church and the Government, was sentenced to be "whipped, to have both his ears cut off, to be fined £40, and to be banished the plantation." "All of which were forthwith executed."

Thomas Petit, for *suspicion* of slander, idleness, and stubbornness, was ordered to be severely whipped, and to be kept in hold.

John Wedgewood, *for being in the company of drunkards* (sic), was ordered to be set in the stocks.

John Kitchen, for showing books which he was commanded to bring to the governor, and forbidden to show to any other, was fined ten shillings.

In the matter of dress—although in this respect the Puritans were by no means peculiar, and might have found abundant precedents in the practice of the English sovereigns up to and during the reign of Elizabeth—they objected to the extravagance of servants, and forbade them to attire themselves like their masters and mistresses. A New England ordinance of the year 1651 declared,—

"That intolerable excesse and bravery hath crept in upon us, and that it was a matter of detestation and dislike that men of mean conditions and callings should take upon them the garb of gentlemen by wearing gold or silver lace,

or buttons, or points at their knees, to walk in great boots; or women of the same ranke, to wear silk or tiffany hoods or scarfs; which, though allowable to persons of greater estates or more liberal education, was intolerable in persons of suchlike condition."

In the Blue Laws of New Haven, which were not, however, drawn up or codified by the State of Connecticut, it was ordered that no one should "travel, cook victuals, make beds, sweep house, cut hair, or shave on the Sabbath-day; that no woman should kiss her child on the Sabbath or Fasting-day; that no one should keep Christmas or Saint days; and that every male should have his hair cut round according to a cap." To "make any motion of marriage to any man's daughter or maid-servant, not having first obtained leave and consent of the parents or masters so to do," was made punishable "either by fine or whipping, or both, at the discretion of the bench," and according to the gravity or aggravation of the offence.

Such were the Blue Laws. They disappeared long ago from America, as they had previously disappeared from England and Scotland; not, however, without leaving behind them, on both sides of the Atlantic, some traces of the ancient spirit—some embers, as it were, of the old fire of intolerance, that might on occasion be fanned into a blaze. The "unco guid and the rigidly righteous"—"the wise in their own conceit"—the "holier than thou" people—the well-meaning humanitarians, doctrinaires, and theory-mongers, who would rule the world as they would rule a school or a nursery, and who would thrust the action of government into the domain of private life, and make everybody good, virtuous, temperate, and well-behaved by Act of Parliament,—never seem to fail among the English-speaking races, under whatever sky they may establish their homes. The progress of civilisation, and the happy removal of theological unbelief and every

form of religious dissent from the category of offences which it is the duty of the State to punish, have greatly circumscribed the sphere of action left to those uneasy spirits who would reform the world on the principle that because they are virtuous, or claim to be so, there shall be no more cakes and ale. But there is still a wide domain left to them; and within that domain they are as active, as restless, as insatiable, and as conceited, as their Puritan predecessors.

The forms which the old intolerance assumes in our day are principally confined to what is wrongly called "Sabbath" observance and to total abstinence from fermented liquors, both of which it is sought to enforce by the action of the Legislature and the hand of the civil magistrate. There are, it is true, some minor armies of coercion in the field. One of these hates tobacco-smoke as much as others dislike Sunday recreation, and another would wage as fierce a warfare against the consumption of animal food as their fellow-intolerants wage against the abuse, and even the use, of wine, beer, and spirits. But the anti-nicotian crusaders, and, more especially, the vegetarians, who see nothing but a vice in beef and mutton, and nothing but virtue in cabbage and potatoes, are in such woeful minorities, and so little able to make head against "*le ridicule qui tue*," as scarcely to need even this passing notice of their little eccentricities. The Blue-Law Sabbatarians and Total Abstiners are, however, a much more formidable class. They have got law and custom partially on their side, and are continually striving to make the law more Blue, and the custom more imperative. In the case of Sabbath observance, the very name of which is Jewish and not Christian, it is the old Puritanic idea revived in non-Puritanic days, and the old Puritanic spirit waxing fierce to wrath—a spirit that, not contented with the liberty to do as

it pleases in the matter in dispute between itself and society, makes itself miserable because it cannot compel others to wear sackcloth who would prefer fine linen, or to eat thistles and hay when bread and grapes would be more agreeable. The ultra-Sabbatarians talk and act as if they would, if they could, prevent the sun from shining, the birds from singing, and the streams from flowing, on their favourite day. But failing the power to stop the great timepiece of Nature altogether, they do their best to convert the day, which should be one of peace on earth, goodwill to men, rest from unnecessary toil, and innocent enjoying of God's beautiful world, into a day of gloom, acerbity, and bitterness, and shut up the poor and the suffering in the fetid alleys and pestilential lanes of over-crowded cities, rather than allow a railway train to start upon the land, or a steamer to run upon the rivers, to convey them to the fresh air that our modern civilisation denies them in their homes. Public opinion, however, within the last few years, has ceased to favour the "bitter" observance of the Sabbath, and to content itself with striving for the "better" observance of the Lord's Day; and a vast interval of time, if measured by the progress of thought rather than by years, has passed since the days, at the beginning of the present century, when a magistrate of Glasgow was fined for walking on the "Green" on the "Sabbath" with some London visitors, and showing them the lions of the city, instead of going quietly to the kirk. The English-speaking race has, ever since the Reformation, been greatly inclined to favour Blue legislation on the subject of the day of rest; but the Blueness is no longer so Blue as it used to be, and has received such a tinge of yellow sunlight, that a verdure of increased life and joy has been the result of the admixture. Yet the old intolerance dies hard; and though the law allows the classes who have no day to call their own

but one in seven, to look at the pictures in Hampton Court Palace on Sunday, it will not allow them to look at the better pictures belonging to the nation in the National Gallery, or the wonders of art and nature in the British Museum. The distinction partakes far too much of the old Blue spirit to be logically, or even morally, defensible; yet the ultra-Sabbatarians seem willing to fight to the death rather than make this small concession to the spirit of the age.

But while the Sabbatarians are growing weak in numbers, though pugnacious as ever in temper, the Total Abstiners, the friends of Permissive Compulsion in the matter of the poor man's drink, are growing numerically strong, and besieging the doors of Parliament with their Maine Liquor Laws and their Licensing Bills. They advocate measures such as these, not for the sake of making us all temperate, which is a consummation very devoutly to be wished, if law could bring it about, but for the sake of preventing all but those prosperous people who can stock their wine-cellars at will, from procuring any drink but water, not only on Sunday, but on every other day of the week, if a majority of householders and rate-payers, composed of the comparatively rich and comfortable, shall in any city, borough, or town, take it into their heads that nobody shall procure wine, beer, or spirits within the limits of the same who cannot for lack of money and household conveniency buy their liquor by wholesale and store it for daily use. This, stripped of verbiage, and reduced to the bare skeleton of their purpose, is the true and ultimate meaning of their Permissive Bills and Maine Liquor Laws, and the object of all the machinery which they strive to set in motion for wholly preventing or greatly restricting the sale of the beer or spirits, which are the only stimulants within the reach of the great bulk of the people in the British

Isles, as in all countries that produce no wine.

Is it right to deprive poor people of their beer? is an old and very pertinent question on a very sore subject. Some well-meaning philosophers, who perhaps drink Chateau Margaux, Veuve Clicquot, or old Port, answer "Yes! because the poor never know when they have enough, and are not to be safely trusted with the means of intoxication." Other philosophers, who perhaps reconcile practice with theory, and confine their potations to tea or to water, also reply in the affirmative, because, with the strong faith of zealots, they are intolerant of all difference of opinion, and would without hesitation enforce by the strong arm of authority wherever they failed to persuade. But the people most interested—the multitude of hard-working men and women, not only in Great Britain, but in all northern countries—indignantly deny the right of Governments, municipal or general, or of any body of their fellow-citizens, to dictate to them what they shall eat or drink, or what they shall avoid. They insist that beer is necessary to their health, not only as a wholesome stimulant, but as an article of diet; and as medical science, as well as experience, proves that it is the abuse and not the use of stimulating liquors that does the mischief, the poor claim that they have as much legal and moral right as the rich to drink what they can afford, in such quantities as suits their health and fancy—paying the penalty of excess exactly as the rich do, and which outraged nature exacts with merciless impartiality. The truth is, that the apostolic recommendation, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind," applies as thoroughly to this question as to all other points of social or religious practice and belief in a land of civil and religious liberty, and is not to be weakened in its relevancy or authority by the assertion that drunkenness is an evil or a crime from

which the mass of mankind requires to be guarded. Gluttony is an evil, if not a crime; but who would make a Blue Law against over-indulgence in turtle or venison, or any other edible that gourmands or gourmets love? Habitual uncleanness and filthiness of person is an offence of the individual against himself, as drunkenness is. It is also an offence against society, inasmuch as it may tend to spread contagious diseases; but are we to have a Blue Law against dirt on the person, and compel every man to bathe himself every day, or to be thrown into a tank or into a river by the police in the interest of public safety? The evils of intemperance in drink are not to be disputed. We have all heard the stale old arguments a thousand times. We have all been bored and dosed *ad nauseam* with the incontrovertible but weary statistics, which prove to the satisfaction of the stolidest amongst us that drunkenness fills our jails, our workhouses, and our lunatic asylums, and that it is the cause of infinite private misery, as well as of public disgrace and cost. To set forth all these things is but to slay the slain. We all know them, and we all deplore them; and if the total abstainer pins us in a corner, and shouts in our ears that drunkenness is an impoverishing, selfish, degrading, brutalising, and maddening vice, we admit the fact, and decline to argue further with him until he suggests the remedy. But when Parliament is asked to support or to consent to a Blue Law either to punish the fools who drink too much, or to prevent people who are not fools from drinking in moderation, it becomes the duty of every friend of liberty to take care that wrong is not done, and that laws are not passed which it will be impossible to enforce, even if they do not tend to increase the very evils which they are intended to remove.

A hundred years ago, and even much more recently, drunkenness

was the especial vice of the upper classes in this country. It was the fashion to be ultra-convivial. The man who could not carry "a proper skinful of wine" was considered a poor mean creature, and he lost caste accordingly. The three-bottle man was a hero, the six-bottle man all but a demigod, in the estimation of such roystering bacchanalians as our grandfathers and great-grandfathers. It was, doubtless, very shocking and very degrading—and had there been any professional philanthropists in those days—any dealers in "isms," and any preachers and spouters of "progress"—it would have been very easy to have got up a striking case for Parliamentary interference with the rich and the aristocratic in their favourite indulgence. It might have been shown—in the words which we proceed to borrow from the Report of a Committee of Clergymen of the Church of England, presented to the Lower House of Convocation of the province of Canterbury, in February 1869—"that loss of health and intellect, decay of strength, disease in its most frightful forms, and premature death, were the usual products of intemperance"—"that the temper was soured, the passions inflamed, the whole nature brutalised by it; in short, that there was no enormity of blasphemy in language and cruelty in action of which even persons naturally gentle and well conducted were not capable, and to which they were not impelled, when under the influence of drink. The family affections were blunted or obliterated, the tenderest relations were outraged and set at nought—husbands were neglected by their wives, wives were subjected to revolting cruelty and violence by their husbands—and the sin of the parent was visited on a stunted, sickly, and debilitated offspring."

These eloquent words were applied by their reverend authors to the drinking habits of the poor a year ago; but they would have

equally well applied to the drinking habits of the rich in the eighteenth century, had legislation been attempted at that day with the view of enforcing sobriety on the offending upper classes. Nothing was done, however—nothing was proposed; no impediments were put in the way of the squire or the rector, or the wealthy landowner, merchant, or professional man, to prevent him from buying wine and brandy, or from making a beast of himself. "To be as drunk as a lord," became at last the common remark of the poor when one of their own class fell into the vice which afflicted those above them. Yet without the aid of law—without repression—without interference with the trade of the wine-merchant—without even the denunciations of the pulpit,—for the parson of the olden time loved his bottle quite as well as the squire,—this disgusting vice became unfashionable, and died out among the rich. It died out so thoroughly, that a drunken man in the position and rank of a gentleman is a spectacle rarely seen; and, when seen, marked by the reprobation of every one among whom the offender is wont to find his friends and companions.

The reverend gentlemen, from whose Report to Convocation in 1869 we have already quoted, admit this improvement in the manners of the rich. They state,—

"That while the evil of social intemperance has of late years greatly diminished in the upper and middle ranks of society, no proportionate improvement has taken place amongst the labouring classes of our people; on the contrary, that drinking prevails amongst them in our commercial, manufacturing, and agricultural districts, and in both the army and navy, to a frightful extent,—and this notwithstanding the multiplied efforts of religion and philanthropy, and the many agencies employed during the last quarter of a century to counteract this baneful habit. It would also appear that the vice of intemperance is not confined to the male population, or to persons of mature age, but is spreading to an alarming degree among women

and the young. Indeed, it appears that in many parts of the country the evil begins at the earliest age, and that youths and children may be found amongst its victims; and thus the physical, moral, and spiritual life of our people becomes infected at its source."

Do not these facts, for facts they unfortunately are, warrant the true friends of temperance—who comprise millions of people—who are neither total abstainers nor advocates of a Maine Liquor or any other Blue Law, in doubting—whether perfect liberty, together with education of the mind and morals, are not the only adequate remedies for habitual intemperance? The rich have not been molested by law, or by the intermeddling of organised philanthropy, but have been converted from gross intemperance into decorous sobriety by their own sense of right and propriety. The poor, on the contrary, have been lectured at and preached at, and prevented by the law—as far as the law was able—from obtaining, more especially on Sundays, the drink they required, and to which they were accustomed like their ancestors before them; and the result has been an increase of drunkenness! It seems to follow, as a logical deduction from these facts, that the less the law meddles with the rich, the less the rich drink; and that the more the law meddles with the poor, the more the poor drink. Such are the facts, let the true explanation of them be what it may.

It should be borne in mind that the increase of intemperance among the poorer classes is by no means peculiar to the British Isles, that it prevails among the Americans quite as much as among ourselves, and that the Americans, like us, are afflicted with two evils—the want of cheap, good, nourishing and un-intoxicating wine; and that, like us also, they are seriously afflicted with the fussy intermeddlesomeness of well-meaning but impertinent philanthropists, who, seeing nothing but the abuse of God's

bounty, seek by Blue Laws and otherwise to prohibit or to punish its use. The tone of American society has not universally attained that high pitch which it has assumed in Great Britain, and which ostracises habitual offenders against sobriety from the company of ladies and gentlemen, and sends them to Coventry. And all the efforts of the Blue Law givers, where such laws have been introduced, with a majority at their back, have only resulted in transferring the public sale of small quantities of intoxicating liquors from the wine and spirit merchant to the apothecary, leaving the wholesale trade to the free use of all who are wealthy enough to keep the keys of their own wine-cellar. People *will* drink beer and spirits both in Great Britain and in America, where wine is scarce; and *will not* drink to excess in France, Italy, Spain, and other southern countries, where wine is cheap, and as much a necessary of life as bread, and no one thinks of unnecessary indulgence in either the one or the other.

A comparison and study of all these facts lead to the conclusion that law, Blue or otherwise, is of no efficacy in the enforcement of sobriety, and that the real remedies for intemperance are to be found in a totally different direction from that recommended by the weak people who, afraid that their own moderation and that of the poor, whom they treat as babes and sucklings, is not to be depended upon, think it wiser and safer altogether to avoid the temptation, which they might not be able to resist, and to prevent everybody else, including people of stronger will and sense than their own, from running into it. The true remedies are to be sought by the poor, and the friends of the poor, where they have been found by the rich—first, in social efforts for raising the standard of morality, so that the poor labourer's wife as well as the duchess shall set herself against drunkenness in

her lover, husband, son, or brother, as the one degrading vice and sin which she will neither forgive nor tolerate; and, second, in providing for people of small means really genuine and wholesome liquor, which they may drink at their meals with their families, without running any more risk of intoxication than the richer man does when he drinks his pale ale or his claret in moderation, and consumes them not for the sake of stimulating hilarity, but as articles of diet, as healthful as his bread or his beef.

In one great and essential respect the poor have not the same means for protecting themselves against knavish dealers and retailers as the rich have. The rich man has the pick of the market, as well as some knowledge of the purity and genuineness of the article which he desires to purchase. The poor man must deal where he can, not always where he would—and is, to an infinitely greater extent than the rich, the victim of the fraudulent traders, who first put water in his ale or beer to increase its quantity, and afterwards, to disguise its consequent weakness, infuse tobacco-juice, *cocculus indicus*, and other noxious drugs in it, to make it strong again. It is this stuff which poisons and sometimes maddens the poor; and it is against the robbers and the assassins—for they are no better—who resort to such practices in order to grow rich the sooner, that the terrors, not of Blue Laws, but of rational and well-considered enactments which it is possible to enforce, should be relentlessly invoked. The penalties against this and other kindred crimes committed by small retail-dealers in the food and drink of the helpless multitude are far too lenient. An occasional fine of twenty shillings to a man who plunders to the extent, perhaps, of double that amount per diem—to say nothing of the superadded poisoning, is but a small matter—a mere feather's touch on the mangy back

of a scurvy scoundrel, instead of the forty lashes with the cat-o'-nine-tails, which would be his more appropriate punishment.

To elevate the tone of moral feeling among the poor; to teach the young girls who are afterwards to be the wives and mothers of poor men how to cook the poor man's food, so that one shilling in their instructed hands may go as far as two shillings in the hands of the ignorant,—so that the wives of English working men may be as good housewives and cooks as the wives of the working men in France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, and other countries—which they certainly are not, and never have been; to give the poor equal facilities with the rich for procuring unadulterated liquors, and to wage a war of extermination against the rapacious villains who, to disguise their robbery, do not hesitate to poison;—these, and such diffusion of education among the very humblest as would teach them that drunkenness is a greater crime against themselves than it is against society, would be far more efficacious in the disinebriation of the people than all the Blue Laws and Maine Liquor Laws that the wit of man can devise. And it is a cheering fact for the consideration of those who think that “a bumper of good liquor will end a contest quicker than jury, judge, or vicar,” and who are of opinion with some of the wisest, best, and most temperate men who ever lived, that the moderate use of wine and beer is conducive to health of body and of mind, that intemperance does not keep pace with the increase of population, but that it is steadily on the decline among the industrious poor. Intemperance, though it is a vice that forces itself upon notice wherever it exists, is not the vice *par excellence* of our age, our people, or our country; and possibly might be even less so than it is, if the law interfered as little with the poor man's liquor

as it does with his beef or bread. The great vice of our age is one of which the poor are the victims, and not the agents—the vice, or rather the crime, which eats into the heart of modern commerce, both wholesale and retail, but especially the latter, and which leads the dealers, in almost every imaginable article that the necessity or the luxury of man requires, to defraud the purchaser, either by short weight or measure, or by deleterious, scandalous, and often murderous adulteration. Wine, beer, spirits, bread, butter, tea, coffee, sugar, are but a few of the articles in the purchase of which the poor and the middle classes are shamelessly defrauded by many villains who would invoke all the terrors of the law against any one who should lay violent hands upon their tills, or pick their pockets of sixpence or a handkerchief, and who do not seem to know that the robberies which they themselves commit are among the worst and most cowardly of all, inasmuch as they are treacherously committed upon the helpless, and sometimes not only involve the loss of substance, but of health, and even of reason. The burglar or the highwayman risks his own carcass when he commits his crimes; but the systematic adulterator of the poor man's food and drink runs no risk to his person, and very little to his purse. If Blue Laws, after the fashion of those of Connecticut, could ever be reintroduced into a civilised community at the present day, we think they might be very fairly and wholesomely tried upon offenders such as these; and that the prevention or condign punishment of such crimes would be truer philanthropy, and far more conducive to the greatest happiness of the greatest number, than the stopping of Sunday locomotion, and the depriving the poor man of his beer from the public-house, while allowing the rich man his wine in his own club or dining-room.

ON THE GOVERNMENT SCHEME OF ARMY REFORM.

THE oracle has spoken. After twelve months' incubation, Mr Cardwell has produced his long-promised army egg; but we are not quite sure if he is doing "as well as could be expected."

In a speech of considerable length, lucidity, and power, but of great dulness, the War Minister has unfolded his scheme for the regeneration of the army. He promises a reduction of £1,069,000 in the estimates, and of 12,000 men in the force of the regulars; but this, he says, is to be accompanied by an increase, not a decrease, in effective power. He brings forward the first part of a measure evidently intended as a feeler on the path to the abolition of purchase. He sweeps away our existing depot system, and introduces a new one in its place. He has united all the civil departments under the heads of Control and Finance. He proposes to bring together the disjointed fragments of our regular and reserve forces in remoulded military districts. In a gentle, timid, and hesitating way, he has even had the courage to ask our Volunteers to be so very good as—if it would be quite agreeable to them—to become a little more efficient (a proposal for which they have snubbed him in the most unmerciful manner); and he has brought forward a new scheme of enlistment, which, if carried out, will wholly revolutionise our army.

There is enough here to deserve some passing attention even from those who take no particular interest in the army, but regard it merely as one of the great branches of the public service.

I. It is always more pleasant to praise than to blame, and we hasten to express our agreement with Mr Cardwell's scheme of recasting the whole of the army service into the three great departments of the

Commander-in-Chief for all executive duties; of the Control department for all administrative ones; and of Finance for all monetary ones. If these great divisions can each be represented in Parliament, the service will gain, and the hands of the War Minister be lightened. His desire to get quit of the double set of establishments, now kept up by a system of mutual distrust as a check upon each other, and to substitute for it a system resting on the principle of a fair division of the work to be done, under a single direction, amongst the necessary departments, who are to work together with mutual confidence, under the check of real but undivided responsibility, we regard as deserving of all praise as a real and great step in administrative progress.

II. In regard to the new department of Control, much difference of opinion exists amongst military men. We have always strenuously supported it, on the ground that the fusing of all the disunited, semi-hostile branches of our civil administrative system into one must be attended, if properly executed, with a great economy of time, labour, and money. And such we still believe has been the result. Of course the transfer from one system to another cannot be effected without difficulty, jars, and heartburnings; but time will diminish these. There is, however, one rock ahead upon which we fear that the Control department is in much danger of striking—and that is, the desire of extending its power beyond its own proper *purely civil and administrative functions*, to the *executive and military ones* of the army. There seems to be an inclination in it to emancipate itself from military control, and to absorb within itself the whole

of the executive duties of the Quartermaster-General's department. A more fatal mistake, and one more certain to bring ruin on a force on the field, could not be made. In peace the Adjutant-General's, in war the Quartermaster-General's department, is the most important of the executive branches of the service. Strategy is the art of moving troops, and on skill in it depends the fate of war. Now any attempt, however disguised, to take the direction of this out of military and put it into civilian hands, would be simple ruin to a force. It is the first and most important duty of the military Staff to arrange in all its details *the whole movement of the troops on the theatre of war*; it is the equally important but *entirely subordinate* duty of the Control department to see that they are properly supplied with every necessary during the movements thus arranged and ordered by the military Staff. But for this purpose the whole orders of the army in the field, *of every kind*, must pass from the general commanding, *through his chief of the Staff*, to the two subordinate departments of the Army Staff on the one hand and the Control Staff on the other. Any attempt to break through this chain of responsibility by putting the head controller of the army in the field in direct personal relations with the general commanding, and so rendering the chief of the Staff irresponsible for the due execution of military movements, would entail nothing but certain destruction upon any force handled on principles so fatal. We trust that the reported tendency of the Control regulations in this direction has been either misstated or exaggerated. In so far as the Control department has consolidated the existing civil departments, it has done unmixed good; in so far as it may encroach upon the military duties of the executive Staff, it will cause unmixed evil.

III. Mr Cardwell's plan of dividing the country into tolerably equal military districts, and placing the whole forces—line and reserve, regulars, pensioners, militia, yeomanry, and volunteers—in each entirely under the supervision of the general commanding, is a great step in administrative progress, and one which will add much to the war-strength of the country. It will tend to unite the different branches of the land-service together, and will cause the warlike resources of the State to be organised on somewhat of a uniform system, and with a uniform end in view.

IV. We wish we could give as unqualified a support to Mr Cardwell's proposal to reduce the army by 12,000 men. Last year about the same number were reduced. It is easy to calculate at this rate when all anxiety about the army estimates will cease from the army itself having vanished away. Nothing is more simple than to show a decreasing estimate by a steady perseverance in disbanding troops. But this is not what Mr Cardwell professes to do. He says our disposable force at home will (including our reserves) be stronger in the regular army than ever. We fear this assertion rests upon a very transparent fallacy. He ignores the fact that (1) the troops in the colonies, though not so quickly got at, were just as really useful as those at home; and (2) that our colonies are now left utterly undefended. Had we simply withdrawn the regular troops from the colonies, and not reduced them, then our force would really have been greater, because, though only the same in numbers, our army would have been in a more concentrated and handy position. But to bring regiments home from the colonies, or break up regiments in the colonies, and then reduce our numbers at home by an equivalent amount, is simply,

to weaken by so much our regular army.* For it must be clearly borne in mind, that since we have adopted the principle of leaving all our colonies (properly so called, as contradistinguished from military foreign stations) undefended, and concentrating our force in these islands, the moment a war breaks out a much greater demand than formerly will fall upon the home-force. It will have to provide at once for (1) a defensive army to hold Great Britain and Ireland; (2) an offensive army to be able to strike any required blow; and (3) for the *military reoccupation* of such of our colonies as may be in danger. It is perfectly absurd to say that because the home-force is not diminished, our war-power is therefore not decreased; when the real fact is, that we have brought this result about by simply disbanding numbers equivalent to all the troops by which we formerly held military possession of our colonies, and leaving them utterly defenceless—a prize to whoever will put out his hand to take them.

Again, in the matter of the existing reserve there is a complete fallacy. The reserve consists of two parts—a real *bond fide* reserve of 2000 men, and a nominal reserve of 10,000 militiamen who have become bound to transfer their services to the line when called on. These Mr Cardwell hopes to raise this year to 3000 and 20,000 men respectively. Take them at these hoped-for but not realised numbers, and you will find that the only real *addition* to your *effective* force consists of the 3000 men of the first reserve—trained soldiers ready to resume their places in the ranks. The 20,000 of the militia reserve

are a mere myth, as they are obtained simply by taking that number of their very best men away from the militia, and by utterly emasculating that force. In other words, you will paralyse 80,000 tolerable militia to get 20,000 not very good half-drilled recruits for the line.

The real practical result of Mr Cardwell's reform is, that in two years you have reduced the regular forces by 24,000 men, to balance whom you will have a real reserve of 3000; in other words, you have diminished your force by 21,000 good soldiers. We do not object to this result if it is what the country wishes, only let there be no mistake about it. Let the country know that it is diminishing expense and efficiency at the same time.

V. Mr Cardwell proposes to reduce our regular regiments at home to 500 rank and file each—that is, to one-half their present strength. They will therefore be in fact mere skeletons, not battalions capable of taking the field themselves. But this *cadre*, he says, we can at once raise to its full war-force and *put in the field* by filling up the vacancies by 500 men from the militia reserve. Now let the nation distinctly understand this. A regiment so composed will for a year to come be *utterly untrustworthy* as an instrument of war. Could you, like the Prussians, reinforce it by 500 thoroughly-trained soldiers, who had been embodied for three years continuously, who had not been for more than that time absent from the ranks, and who had all been trained in that very regiment, then you would have at once a powerful battalion. But what you will really have will be a *cadre* of 500 men, one-half of whom, at the

* In the year 1869-70, the number of troops in the colonies was 34,502, in the year 1870-71, the number in them will be 23,561—the reduction in the numbers stationed in the colonies will therefore be for this year about 11,000 (see Mr Cardwell's speech in bringing forward the Army Estimates). But the numbers proposed to be reduced for this year are 12,308.—See Army Estimates for 1870-71, p. 3.

least, will be very young soldiers ; and amongst these you will thrust a rabble of 500 raw militiamen, taken from different regiments, knowing nothing of one another or of the corps to which they come, never having even seen before the officers and non-commissioned officers under whom they are to serve, and whose sole training can have been only about, on an average, three months' drill spread over as many years. Will any sane man who has ever seen men contend together in battle venture to assert that a regiment so composed could be trusted to engage with anything but a corps in an equally lamentable state of inefficiency ? It would take at least a year's embodiment and steady drill to transform such a heterogeneous mob into a battalion of trustworthy disciplined soldiers.

VI. But one of the most fatal of all Mr Cardwell's economies has been the destruction of our depot-battalion system, and the substitution for it of a mode of affiliation of depots with regiments, of which it can only be said, that if it had been devised by the worst enemy of Britain for the express purpose of destroying its regimental system, it could not have been done more successfully. Under the present arrangement, the depots of regiments were kept united in depot-battalions in fixed quiet quarters, where they were employed exclusively in training the recruits for the service-companies under a staff of officers selected for their special aptitude for this purpose. Now this whole system is to be broken up. Only one depot-battalion is to be retained, and every depot beyond what it can contain is to be tied like a millstone round the neck of some unfortunate corps at home, which is to go through its period of home-service dragging this incubus about with it wherever it goes,—loathing it, of course, as Sinbad loathed the old man of the mountains.

Now the power of an army depends upon its regimental system—destroy that, and you destroy all ; and how can you expect the recruits of a corps to be cared for, to be drilled, to be trained, to be disciplined, to have that anxious careful watch kept over them by which alone the feeling and spirit of soldiers can be instilled, if they are to be attached to a strange corps, and dragged about with it in all its ceaseless changes, like a heavy shot chained to a convict's leg ? Will the colonel and staff of a regiment devote themselves to the interests not of their own but of an alien battalion ? Will they take a perpetual charge of its records, a never-ending care of its drill, an untiring interest in its interior economy ? The question is so ridiculous that it requires merely to be stated to be answered. There is only one point about it which consoles us. It is in itself so utterly absurd, and is freighted with consequences so fatal, that we are perfectly certain that, unless it is intended deliberately to destroy the army, it must be abandoned ere eighteen months elapse. We were perfectly petrified when we heard that such a proposal had received the sanction of military authority. We have heard it hinted, we know not with what truth, that matters had come to this alternative, that a choice was given either to disband a number of regiments, or to reduce the depot-battalions. If this was so, it may have been on the whole the wisest policy to retain the *cadres* of the regiments ; but heavy, indeed, must be the responsibility which the War Minister took upon himself when he laid such an alternative on the military authorities—when he called upon them to choose between the ruin of regiments or of a system ! between destroying our strength in the present, or dooming it to destruction in the future !

VII. On Mr Cardwell's scheme for the fusion of the ranks of lieu-

tenant and ensign, with a compensation for the regulation value of the lieutenantancy only, and a decided non-recognition of the claims of officers to the over-regulation price actually paid, we had intended to say much, but we will now say nothing. In obedience to the clearly-marked sense of the House, and the unanimous feeling of the army, he has withdrawn his proposal, and announced the intention of Government to submit the whole question to the investigation of a Royal Commission. The House of Commons has shown itself to be not yet advanced enough in democratic injustice to sanction a proposal for the pure and simple confiscation of the property of British officers.

VIII. But by far the most important of all Mr Cardwell's proposals is the change which he desires to make in the mode of enlistment in the army. This in reality amounts to a complete revolution in it; and it is well that the country should clearly understand what is demanded of it before it finally sanctions this scheme. What Mr Cardwell seems to propose is, *to give up a professional army*, and to substitute for it a force composed of young men who come to amuse themselves by playing at soldiers for a few years in the ranks.

This is a great and momentous change, and not one to be taken lightly and without a full consideration of all its consequences. The old professional army of Britain which carried it successfully through the wars of Marlborough and Wellington, through the long, hard, fitful struggle in the Peninsula, through the great duel of Waterloo, through the doubtful chances of the Crimean contest, through the deadly peril of the Indian mutiny, is not a reed to be lightly cast aside.

But we wish to be perfectly fair to Mr Cardwell; and we will therefore quote his own words in explanation of, and in justification for, the changes he desires to make:—

VOL. CVIL.—NO. DCLIV.

"I pass from our regular forces to another subject, on which I know that many of those who hear me take a greater interest than they do in even the regular forces. I speak of the reserves. Last year we had a good deal of conversation in this House about the best method of concentrating our reserve forces, and I think it was agreed that the mode by which we could best accomplish that object was getting men to enter the army for a short service and then passing them back into the community of civilians, with the understanding that they should be ready to assist in defending the country in case of emergency. This is not an easy subject, it is not to be doubted that it is a very difficult subject, and I will not conceal from the Committee that some of the most experienced soldiers do not expect such a plan to succeed. Their reason for that opinion was this,—they thought that when persons of the humble condition in life of ordinary recruits entered the army, they did so with the view of spending the best part of their life in it, and of acquiring a pension for their old age. We have no conscription, and therefore anything we do in this way must be done with the consent of the recruit. I have a great respect for the opinion of the experienced men to whom I have alluded; but my answer to this objection is, that I hope for better things. I look forward to seeing the broad line of demarcation between the army and civil life in some way diminished. We have adopted the system of allowing soldiers to learn trades, of permitting them to spend their spare time in some useful labour, and I think we may expect to see many of the young men of this country passing through the army, learning trades in it, and afterwards returning into civil life, to be ornaments and advantages to those around them, and at the same time to be ready to contribute to the defence of the country in case of emergency. Our plan is this,—*that the enlistment should be for twelve years, but that if the regiment be about to go abroad—to India, for instance—the actual period of service with the standards should be for six years. In the case of regiments likely to remain at home—say regiments just returned from India—the period of actual service with the standards might be still further reduced. I think there would be no difficulty in reducing it to three years. We propose that after the period of service with his regiment the soldier should be permitted*

to re-enter civil life, but to be called out as the Royal Naval Reserve men and the men of our present Army Reserve are called out. While under this obligation he will receive a payment of 4*l.* a-day, which is about as much as the soldier serving in the army receives of money paid direct. There may be re-engagement, but that will be optional on both sides. There will be no claim to re-engagement, but it will not be prohibited. There are constitutions which cannot stand the climate of India for more than a short period, but there are constitutions for which a long period of service in that country is suitable, so that in all probability we shall have men anxious to re-engage for service in India. Soldiers would not, of course, have any claim to pension for the short engagement that we propose, but we think this engagement from its nature will be the means, if it succeed at all, of drawing into the army a large number of men who otherwise would never join it. We do not propose, after their period of service with the standard, to have them drilled in the manner regular troops are drilled. During six years of actual service in the army they will have learnt sufficient to do them for the remaining six years of their engagement. We propose that after leaving their regiments they shall have the same sort of training as the Volunteers—drill in the evening—which will not oblige them to leave their ordinary employment. While proposing this plan, *we do not pretend to altogether give up our present mode of enlistment, because, as we cannot be certain that we shall succeed, we must have the means of falling back on the existing system.* But to the experienced soldiers who say that we shall not get recruits under our new plan, because the recruit joins the army with the intention of spending most of his life in it and of looking to a pension, I make this answer: 'You and I are talking of two different persons. You are speaking of the man who now joins the army. I admit that he wants a longer service and a pension; but *I speak of the man who does not now join the army, but whom we wish to induce to join it; of the young man who is reluctant to spend all his life away from his own village; who may wish to contract marriage, but who would give a good deal for the advantages of training in the army for a few years.*' There must be inducements

to men of that kind to enter the army, for they do not enter it now. The plan I have described does not apply to the cavalry or the artillery."*

Mr Cardwell is plain and frank here. He wishes to get quit of the professional soldier, and to substitute in his place the young man who *wants to marry, and is reluctant to spend his life away from his own village*; to get quit of the man who would live and die for his profession, to obtain in his place one whose heart will never be in it, who will look on it only as a means to an end, who will come to it not as the object of a life, but as the plaything of an hour. And that profession to be so treated is war—war, the most earnest, the most engrossing of all professions; for in all others a man is only called on to give his time, his labour, his thought: in it he must give, without stint, all that he holds most dear—his life.

It seems almost like irony to talk thus of the soldier's bloody trade—to imagine you will find a willing food for cannon in the respectable young man of the middle classes, careful of his life, prudent of his means, looking back on his village home, looking on to his peaceful wedding.

Were these, could these be, the ideas of the stern ruthless men who carried with a devoted faith the name and the glory of England to the uttermost parts of the earth—who planted her standards on the green mounds of Torres Vedras, and bore them in triumph through the hills of Spain—to the tread of whose conquering footsteps the streets of Paris and the capitol of Washington, the palaces of Lucknow and the Bala Hissar of Caubul, the ramparts of Peking and the rocky summits of Magdala, have rung? Were these the men who went forth to the wild storm of Badajos, and when the breach ran red with gore, rather than give

* 'Times' of 4th March 1870.

back, sank on the chained sword-blades, and there died? Were these the men who, as the sun went down, stood, few, wounded, and victorious, on Albuera's fatal hill? Were these the iron veterans of the light division, who, rather than see their enemies escape, marched through the lonely valleys of the Pyrenees till "they frothed at the mouth and died"? Were these the men who gave their souls to God, that the star of England should not sink beneath the hug of the Russian bear on the misty neck of Inkerman? And they are the men you would reject for the careful, cautious, prudent, well-behaved sons of the middle classes—thinking of their marriage and their fortunes, and of the happiness of their homes to come!

The *enfants perdus* of the world are your best soldiers—the men who have lost all taste for civil life, who are no loss to civil society, who have weighed life in the balance and found it wanting—men of wrecked prospects and ruined hopes—men who seek in the wild excitement of the strife an escape from the memory of bright days gone by—from the thought of fortunes once fair, now fallen and blasted—from the broken dream of faith in a woman's love. Such men filled the ranks of the Zouave battalions of France during the Crimean war—such men were to be found in numbers in the European regiments of the Old Company's service in India,—men very hard to hold in peace, but harder still to fight in war.*

Apart, however, altogether from the fault which we think Mr Cardwell makes in seeking to recruit the army exclusively from a class not suited to its requirements, we are convinced that his scheme will

break down from not being adapted to the conditions under which alone you can hope to attract recruits in our complicated state of society.

We are quite as anxious as Mr Cardwell for the formation of a really powerful and efficient reserve; but we do not wish to ruin the regular army in the pursuit of that object. We desire to see at once a regular army of *real soldiers* and a strong reserve of *thoroughly-drilled men* in the prime of life; and we are convinced that there is only one way in which you can obtain this result, and that is, by giving to the enlisted soldier the *option* either of continuing on in his trade as a profession for life, or of quitting it, after a few years' training, to pass into the reserve. By this means you will at once secure the present class of professional soldiers, and also attract the young men of the middle classes, who are so much the object of Mr Cardwell's aspirations.

As we have elsewhere fully stated,† we do not believe that you will ever get men voluntarily to engage in an occupation in which they are expected to spend the first and most valuable years of their lives, and then to be turned out into the cold to begin the battle of life again. They will only, on the one hand, join a profession in which they can remain if they like it, and from which they can derive a livelihood; and, on the other, they are unwilling to bind themselves by an engagement from which they cannot recede. What they desiderate is, the power of remaining in their trade if they like it, combined with the possibility of quitting it if they do not do so.

In other words, "You must, on the one hand, attract the soldier by

* This view, on the one hand, is as much an extreme one as Mr Cardwell's "moral young man about to marry" is on the other. The average quality of good recruits are those who, having no turn for the hard continuous labour of civil life, prefer to take, instead of its chances to rise, the certainty of a life of comparative ease, devoid of care, and with a good deal of excitement.

† "On the Limitation of Enlistment and Army Reserves," in 'Blackwood's Magazine' for September 1869, p. 282-89.

holding out to him, as the reward of good and long service, the certainty of a pension. You must, on the other, give him *every facility* to quit the regular army, on condition of joining the reserve, should he be so inclined, after he has been once thoroughly drilled and disciplined. These are the two corner-stones on which the system should rest.”*

This will show how very nearly we coincide with Mr Cardwell's scheme, and yet how completely in principle we differ from it.

Mr Cardwell proposes to enlist the men for twelve years; to that we cordially agree. He next proposes—and here is the gist of the whole scheme—to *turn them out* of the regular army after about three years' service if in a regiment at home, or six years if in one abroad, and pass them into the reserve,—that is, *back into civil life*, with a reserve-pay of 4d. a-day. Now, had Mr Cardwell, instead of making it compulsory for the men to quit the regular army and pass into the reserve, given them the *option* and every encouragement so to do, we should have given it our most cordial support. It is the fatal mistake of *compelling* the men to give up the army *whether they like it or not*, and go back into civil life, that seems to us the decisive objection to his plan, and that because, if universally enforced, it would at one blow destroy the army as a profession—cast forth from its ranks all those who are most valuable in them, and would try to replace them by the prudent, thoughtful young men anxious to marry, and dreaming of their homes, who form Mr Cardwell's *beau idéal* of the soldier of the future. It is evident that what Mr Cardwell desiderates is an army pleasant to command in quarters: unluckily, what war requires is one that will die hard in the field.

But the prudent young men

will never come. They know too well how hard a thing it is to get on in any trade even with the constant earnest devotion of a life. They will never consent to throw away the best and most valuable years of their existence in an unremunerative profession. To talk as Mr Cardwell does of the advantages which a training in the army confers on a man about to enter life is absurd. In civil life a man above all things requires self-dependence—he has to think of everything for himself, to do everything by himself. In the army he is entirely dependent on others—everything is provided for him, everything is prearranged for him. “What service in the army develops is reliance on others: what civil life requires is dependence on one's self.”

Were it not for the power which the War Minister retains in his own hands to fall back upon our present mode of enlistment, in the event of his new method failing, we should look upon his proposal with undisguised alarm. As it is, we are happy he has brought it forward, because it will *bring, once for all, to the test of actual experience* the vexed question of what the wishes really are of those classes from whom our recruits must be drawn. And that is the all-important point to decide in a community where the conscription does not and cannot exist.

If Mr Cardwell's new plan succeeds, we shall willingly confess we have been wrong. If it fails, we trust those whom we have opposed so strongly on this point will equally frankly confess their error.

We regret Mr Cardwell's proposal for one reason only, and that is, because we think it will hinder the speedy formation of a good reserve. Unless we are much mistaken, the result will be that so few men will come forward to enlist under the new rules, that the old mode of en-

* “On the Limitation of Enlistment and Army Reserves,” in ‘Blackwood's Magazine’ for September 1869, p. 286.

listment will have to be almost at once reopened. You will thus practically come to have two systems of enlistment going on at the same time, and the recruit will have to choose under which one he will join the army; but his choice, *once made, will be irrevocable.*

This we regard as a great misfortune. It will keep many from coming to the army who would very willingly do so if they thought that after three or six years they would be at liberty to choose whether they would go on with a military life or return to civil life under the obligation of reserve-service. A man is in a better position to judge of a matter which he has tried than of one of which he is ignorant, and it will discourage many to be forced to make their final election before trying the service at all.*

To sum up our opinion of Mr Cardwell's proposed reforms in a few words. In so far as he proposes to unite under one system and under one head the regular and reserve forces, and to place them all in military divisions under military command, we entirely agree with him; and we regard this determination as one conferring increased strength and additional warlike power upon the country. In so far as he proposes to get quit of that system of distrust which has created

double establishments to be a check upon one another, and to substitute for it one of "well-defined responsibility, simplicity, and reasonable confidence," by recasting them into the three great divisions of military administration, supply, and finance, we cordially go along with him.

But here our agreement ceases. 1. We regard his new depot system as one of the very worst ever devised—so bad, indeed, that, if persevered in, it will sap at its foundation our whole regimental system. 2. We look upon every attempt to extend the power of the Control department from the purely civil administration to the military executive duties of the army as unmixed evil—as certain to entail ruin on real service. 3. We object in the strongest way to his reducing the regular regiments to mere *cadres* of 500 strong, so long as no real reserve of *trained soldiers* (and no man who has not served continuously for three years in the ranks can be called such) is provided wherewith to raise them in time of need to the war-strength. 4. We regard his plan of a militia reserve as a bad makeshift. Taking it at the very best, it will provide 20,000 not very good recruits for the line by depriving the militia of its very best men; for it cannot be too much insisted on that the value of these men will be much greater in

* Whilst these lines were passing through the press, the following explanation and modification of his original scheme (see the 'Times' of the 19th March) has been given by Mr Cardwell in answer to a question from Colonel Lindsay:—"It is proposed that the engagement shall be for 12 years, of which a fixed number in each case will be with the standards and the remainder in the reserve. If, when the short service is coming to an end, the soldier is willing to re-engage, and *her Majesty's Government are willing to accept his services*, he may re-engage for the rest of the 12 years, and similarly afterwards again for nine, making in all 21. It will be a reciprocal choice on the part of the authorities and the soldier, and *not an option on the part of the soldier alone.* It is proposed to have only a certain proportion of men of longer service in the army. The object of training these men is to incorporate them, when an emergency arises, into battalions already existing." From this it is evident that the Minister at War still adheres to what we look on as the objectionable part of his proposal—that of *not giving to the soldier, in good health and of good character, the option of making the army his profession.* Also, that he is desirous of reducing to a small number the proportion of real soldiers, even in the wasted ranks of the existing *cadres*.

their own regiments of militia where they know and are known, than in the line battalions to which they will come as strangers.* 5. We are reconciled to his proposal to turn men compulsorily out of the service after three or six years' training, solely because we believe it will prove so unworkable that it will necessitate a recurrence to our present mode of enlistment. Were it a positive, not an alternative scheme, we should regard it as the destruction of our old professional army, and as an attempt to reconstruct a new one on a principle which is impracticable without a conscription.

We would have the country clearly understand the real drift of the army scheme now before it. It proposes large reductions in money and in numbers, *and the one is nearly proportional to the other*. If the country desires a cheap and a weak army, it will have it. In two years it will have reduced the estimates by over £2,000,000, and the regular army by over 20,000 men. That result is clear and intelligible, and we have nothing to say against it if the country so will. All we desire is, let there be no deception about the matter—no mocking delusion that you have reduced expenditure and gained strength. Let the country clearly understand that we have not now a single regiment of infantry which could be raised to the war footing and with safety trusted in the field,

under, at the very least, nine months' assiduous drill; and that we have not a battery or a squadron fit in numbers for immediate service. And let no fanciful idea that we have a mighty army of volunteers behind, upon whom we can rely as on a tower of strength, be hugged with flattering unction to the soul. There is no one who really knows the composition of our volunteers, and who has studied the necessities of the class from whom they come, who will suppose that it would be possible to put into the field *and keep there for six weeks* 40,000 of them. It is good sometimes to look realities in the face, and not to sleep on in the happy ignorance induced by pretty tables of military statistics neatly drawn up.

We have no idea that anything we can say will produce the least impression on the public. We are well aware that their one idea is that a man clothed, armed, and instructed in the goose-step, is a perfect warrior, and that so long as we have a goodly array of these we are fit for the strain of war. It is those only whom bitter experience in the hour of trial has taught, who know the true value of a disciplined soldier, and of how difficult and slow a growth he is. May the time never come when this country will awake from its delusion; for if it does, it will be when it is too late—amidst the ruin of a people and the crash of a falling empire!

* Many will say Waterloo was fought with regiments hastily filled up with militiamen—and this is true; but they were filled up with militiamen who came from regiments which had been *almost continually embodied* for nearly fifteen years. In other words, in all except actual experience in the field, they had had longer and more careful training than the linesmen amongst whom they went. The militiamen who form our reserve are men who have gone through two or three trainings of a month each. Now a good regiment of disciplined soldiers would easily receive a couple of hundred such men into its ranks without losing efficiency; but a weak *cadre* of 500 would be overwhelmed by an equal force of such recruits being poured into it.

CORNELIUS O'DOWD.

THE TIPPERARY ANSWER.

THE persistence of certain Irish politicians in returning as a member of the House of Commons a person declared by the law to be ineligible, is one of those instances in which logical force has had to give way before the power of a strong sentiment. The men of Tipperary never imagined for a moment that O'Donovan Rossa was to be summoned from his "bit of oakum," as he calls it, to take his place in the House. They did not suppose that the writ to serve as a Knight of the Shire could efface the sentence of a solemn tribunal, or that the emergency which called for his services in Parliament could obliterate the memory of his conviction. Nothing of the kind. These dwellers on the slopes of the "Galtees" are very shrewd-witted and clever fellows. They meant simply to make a protest against the representation of their country being committed to the hackneyed hands of a trading politician. What they desired to assert was this: "Rather let us declare for a man whose extreme opinions have cost him his liberty, than take some lawyer of the lawyers, who pronounces for us to-day that he may prosecute us to-morrow."

It was firing blank-cartridge, it is true. No matter for that. The aim was steady, and the direction showed what would have happened had there been a bullet in the barrel. I don't expect Englishmen to see the thing in this wise. They will doubtless set the whole down as an Irish blunder, one of those bulls like that of the people, who, in '98, used to burn Beresford's notes by way of breaking his Bank—a great mistake, doubtless, financially; but, testing it on the score of feeling, it is well to remember that the men who did this knew that

they were destroying what could have enriched themselves, but who in their patriotism preferred to ruin an enemy to Ireland.

As I have just said, this will not be the English judgment in the matter. They will say, "Pat has been making another bull: he has elected a man who cannot sit, and he has had his trouble for nothing." Had O'Donovan Rossa, however, been free to enter the House and take his place below the gangway, is it quite certain that any measure he might have moved, or any bill he might have initiated, should have become a law? Is it quite sure that he could have carried a confiscation bill or a repeal of the Union, or any other great national boon, in the same sense? Would not the very utmost that could be expected from him be some protest, angry and indignant if you like, against the cruelty and injustice of English rule in Ireland, and the avowal that, though not actually able at the moment to resent it, the Irish people would continue to treasure up the score of their wrongs, waiting for the day and the hour to acquit the debt of their vengeance? and when he had done this, ably and powerfully, as some think, he could have done it, he would sit down, the world no more influenced by the declamation than if he had been passing his time in the tea-room. The "protest," however, would have been made.

In exactly the same spirit has Tipperary acted. What they have declared amounts to this: Rather than anymore Whig-Radical jobbery for Ireland, give us—the impossible! They have had more than enough of what Mr Bright calls "tinkering"—a trade, by the way, for which he himself has of late shown some aptitude. They desire to be dealt

with as a national party, not the following of a priesthood—men far more imbued with patriotism than Popery.

I know well this announcement does not represent them as more manageable as a party; and I can imagine the dismay of the Chief Secretary for Ireland if called upon to treat with these men of strong convictions and unswerving purpose, in lieu of those mitred *Macchiavellis* whose demands will always be tempered by the spirit of the hour they are made in, and whose nice tact teaches them to appreciate the difficulties of a friendly administration.

The people of Ireland have taken to Fenianism pretty much as a man takes to quackery, when he suspects that the regular doctors have been destroying his constitution. I don't mean to say they were right, but I feel that what they have done was logical. They know well that they and their grievances were never thought of by any section in the State till some exigency of party called for the aid of Irish members; and that then the English mind took no other measure of Irishmen than some boon to the Catholic Church—some concession or some flattery to Romanism.

If the Pope can help you to govern Ireland, engage him by all means. I know there are certain bargains where the benefit to be acquired is dearly bought. The Whigs, however, are well accustomed to these dealings, and they are skilful in drawing up their contracts, and need no hints of mine as to evasive clauses. The question, however, is: Can the Pope do now what he might have done fifty years ago? Is Ireland as priest-ridden to-day as it was at the beginning of the century?

He can condemn secret societies, it is true; he can anathematise Fenians, and refuse them the rites of the Church; but for the matter of that he has been cursing all Italy since the day of the Sicardi laws,

and I have not heard that any one has advised their repeal; and it was only when Victor Emmanuel caught a fever the other day that he remembered he was excommunicated.

In the fasting regulations for Lent, read out a few Sundays back in all the chapels of Ireland, there was inserted a clause that ran thus:—

"9. As secret societies are the cause of great evils, tend to promote impiety and infidelity, and are injurious to the public good, the Roman Pontiffs, Benedict XIV., Pius VII., Leo XII., and others, have excommunicated all who engage in them. Hence, Catholics, if Freemasons, Ribbonmen, or Fenians, cannot be admitted to the sacraments. Our beloved Holy Father Pius IX., by a decree of the Holy Office of the 12th January of this year, has expressly declared that the Fenians are subject to the same censures which have been enacted by his predecessors against Freemasons; so that no Fenian can be absolved or receive the sacraments of the Church until he shall have renounced all connection with the Fenian organisation, and abandoned all attempts to promote or assist it. It is to be hoped that all who are engaged in secret societies, availing themselves of the facilities afforded by the present jubilee, will abandon their evil connections and reconcile themselves with the Church of God, out of which they cannot be saved."

The reply to this was given at Waterford and Tipperary. The answer of the people has been in Ireland what it has been in Italy. We are heart-sick of priestly domination, and though it is possible we may be coerced into submission, we refuse to be cursed into it.

I would meanwhile ask of Englishmen to distinguish between Fenians and those who are the authors of what is called "agrarian outrage." People never confounded Garibaldians with brigands in Italy, and why should there be any difficulty in making the distinction in Ireland? I am no apologist for rebellion—I want to make no case for those who plotted the scheme of insurrection in Ireland,—all I would say is, arraign them on the

indictment that applies to them, and do not confound the men who are traitors to England with those who are traitors to all humanity.

The Catholic priesthood in Ireland are either able to put down landlord-murder or they are not. If the former, and if they will do so, they are worth all the concessions you can make them. As regards rebellion, England is surely able to deal with that, and needs neither the Cardinal's curses nor censures; and as to Freemasons, the perils to be apprehended from them are not so appalling or so proximate as to affright us. What we do not see our way to suppress—what our judges declare to be on the increase, and what our police admit to be beyond their power of detection—are threatening notices and murder. These crimes, carried on with a secrecy and a uniformity that imply organisation, have made Ireland a land of terror to live in. They are all more or less concerned with the question of land-tenure. The idea of what can be done by menace has got a fatal hold on the peasant mind of Ireland. It is full time to disabuse men of this impression. None could lend abler assistance to this work of undeception than the Catholic priest, but he has not yet offered you his aid in this di-

rection. He has denounced Freemasons and Fenians, it is true; but it would conduce more to the peace of Ireland if he would censure the threatening letter-writer, and aid in bringing the assassin to justice.

Once more then I say, do not confound together two things essentially different. You would not blend up an action on a bill of exchange with a breach of the Game-laws; and do not confuse Fenianism with "land murder." They are by no means identical, and this "Tipperary answer" might help you so far to the distinction as to show that Romanism only guides you in Ireland, where you know the way yourself; but where the path becomes difficult, and the track uncertain, it extinguishes the lantern, and leaves you to grope on how you can! To tell a man with a fractured thigh-bone, "I am not going to put splints on your femur, or 'set' your limb, but I am about to present your domestic chaplain with a new set of vestments," is poor comfort after all, and yet it is very like Whig rule in Ireland; and it is to such quackery Tipperary has replied; so that if you say, "I'll give you something you don't want," Tipperary answers, "I'll send you somebody that can't go to you."

ON SOME RASH INVESTMENTS.

A certain Ruffo Scilla has been swindling his countrymen at Naples to pretty purpose. This man contrived to persuade a number of simple-minded people that capital might be so advantageously employed as to yield a safe return of nearly cent per cent; and by this bribe induced many persons of limited means to trust him with their little hoards, legacies, bequests, or savings, on the faith of his being able to give them this liberal interest. For a while all seemed to go on prosperously. The lenders not only received their large

dividends with punctuality, but when minded to withdraw their capital, experienced neither difficulty nor delay. The regularity and exactitude of his dealings so far succeeded in silencing all the objections and warnings of the press, that gradually the class of lenders extended from the humble people who at first embraced this hope of gain, to small shopkeepers and clerks, till it reached a more well-to-do order of men in professions and high employ, and finally engaged a large number of titled persons, whose fortunes, though unhappily

not their desires, might have exempted them from this pursuit of gain. In fact "Society"—since that is the name for it—entered as eagerly into this wild lottery as the very neediest beggar who deposited his copper investment in weekly instalments.

M. Scilla was never called on to explain by what employment of capital such interest could be returned. No one presumed to ask in what industry, or to what speculation, the sums he borrowed were devoted. His theory, so far as he gave it to the world, was: The bankers, who yield you some three or four per cent for your money, are rogues and swindlers; they grow rich upon your foolish trustfulness, or your ignorance of financial operations. Money has a far more rapid growth than they like to own to, and I am here to prove it. Give me your ten carlini, and in a year you shall have back twenty. He pointed to Rothschild, Galliera, or Salamanca, and asked, Who has enriched these men, if not that credulous public, who, satisfied with a mere fraction of what was their own, have consigned the bulk of their profits to these crafty financiers?

It was a pleasant theory; and when only once satisfied that it was a safe one, who could doubt that it would be popular? Such was the success in the present case, that the discoverer was regarded as the benefactor of his country.

Now there is this peculiarity about delusions, that if they only endure for a certain time they become respectable, whereas if they be short-lived they are swindles. The fallacy that has come down to us mellowed by time and tradition, we can afford to treat tenderly, and when we refute it, we do so without passion or exaggeration, but calmly, decently, and decorously; whereas, if the trick be discovered at once, we have no language strong enough in which to denounce and decry it. M. Scilla's roguery was a "short-time

bargain;" could he have insured it a life of years, he might have rested under a monument raised by the gratitude of his countrymen. His balloon, however, was only a soap-bubble, and it burst almost as it was blown.

One fine morning it was discovered that the bank had disappeared. M. Scilla had fled. All Naples had been cheated, and three millions sterling abstracted from, in a great degree, the most indigent class of a very pauperised capital.

Of course there is much and well-merited condemnation of his dishonesty. The newspapers are filled with piteous tales of the ruin he has caused; and a number of suicides bear witness to the despair that has befallen his victims. On such sad occasions, that large class who may be known as the "I-told-you-so people" reap a rich harvest; and every possible warning that could come after an event is paraded with an amount of force and circumstance actually overwhelming. If I desired to speak of M. Scilla, I should give him as many hard names as my neighbours are doing. Indeed I do not know what language can compass the almost infinite baseness of such deliberate rascality. It is not, however, of him I am thinking: I am rather directing my thoughts to those poor deluded people, who, with all the pity bestowed on their misfortunes, are not escaping some very pungent little sarcasms on their ignorant credulity, their inordinate lust for profit, and their covetousness.

Not that I am prepared to rebut a single item of these allegations. They were as greedy and as credulous as you like to make them. It is the old story, however—the "*populus vult decipi*" experience that none of us need look surprised at. All that I would say on this head is, that money is not the only investment in which men dream of centuple profits; that even in our own hard-headed thrifty land, men

are lending out their beliefs on just as slight security as these poor lazzaroni did their coin, and calculating on inordinate returns for the investment, with this important difference, however, that as the delusion will last longer, it will be eminently respectable.

Take, for instance, one of our latest delusions—that, by what is called “fixity of tenure,” the Irish peasant was to be established in the place of the landlord, and be endowed with all the rights of proprietorship: a dissolving view that is already dispelled, though with what consequences from the disenchantment we have yet to see.

For my own part, I’d rather face the most savage Neapolitan with the explanation of the fraud practised on him, than meet Paddy with this tale of disappointment.

I will not say that the Government Land Bill is not generous or just. I will not say that it has not considered the case of the tenant with all the leniency that is due to the poor man. I will not deny the evident anxiety to give everything to the tiller, save the absolute rights of property that belong to the owner of the soil. I will enter into no question whether it were possible to have screwed another, and what, privilege out of the landlord. I will only say that Pat has not got that cent per cent the Ruffo Scillas of politics had promised him, and that all the cash he has invested in ball-cartridge has gone for nothing; and for anything the Cabinet have done for him, he need never have shot a landlord nor “peppered” an agent.

M. Scilla would have had but few followers had he limited himself to offering legal interest on loans; and the present Administration would not have received such an accession of Irish votes to their party, had they frankly admitted that they did not mean to confiscate Irish property, but only, by frightening the landlords, make them amenable to moderate concessions, and accustom them to think

themselves lucky if their estates were left to them. The “cent per cent” was, however, held forth in the speeches of agitators and the letters of placemen. “Ireland was to be ruled in an Irish spirit.” “Landlord felonies”—whatever they were—“were to be suppressed;” “the poor man was to be secured in the fruits of his labour.” A number of other very vague pledges were given—all to be redeemed by what? by some contemptible assurance that the tenant must not expect to hold land without paying the rent, and that for all the purposes of property the landlord was nearly where he was before. To be sure there was a grand field for litigation to be opened. There were to be cases for quarter sessions and arbitration, and valuations of improvements, and fierce disputes—to end, doubtless, occasionally, as such disputes do in Ireland, in the suppression of one of the disputants; but all this, though gratifying in its way, and probably in what the Cabinet would call “an Irish spirit,” is still very far from confiscation, and from that “cent-per-cent interest” the investors bargained for.

We are told that the exceptional tenderness with which the Irish tenant-farmer is to be treated is already exciting the jealousy of the English and Scotch farmers, who grumblingly ask, Why are they to be denied the benefits of this profitable legislation? Do these dull men not perceive that discontent is not sufficient? They must do more than murmur if they want relief. They must have what the French call “the courage of their opinion,” even to the extent of a capital felony, if they want any confidence in their sincerity.

When the benevolent lady, who had once established a Magdalene Asylum in Dublin for repentant “unfortunates,” was once applied to for admission by a simple-looking young woman of modest air and decent appearance, the patroness

asked some particulars of her fall, and heard with astonishment that she had not lapsed from virtue. "In that case," said she, "you have no claim for admission here. If you want to be received, you must go and qualify." This is what we say now to the Scotch and English tillers of the soil. How many of you have shot your landlords? Let us see the man amongst you who has put slugs in a bailiff. What a sneaking set of petty larceny knaves

they will exhibit themselves, skulking from crime, and actually trembling at the thought of transportation!

Who wonders, then, if Ireland be discontented, and that Tipperary is as indignant as Naples? There is to be no confiscation after all. It is only the Irish Church is to be ruined; the landlords are to be merely put upon half-pay, and this is what is called a message of peace! All I can say is, I don't envy the man that brings it!

DULL AS DITCHWATER.

The world is very dull just now. If it had not been for the Prince Pierre Buonaparte, and a celebrated trial in England, we should really have nothing to talk of; and now that we have said all the possible things on these two subjects, we are thrown back upon ourselves, with nothing to interest, nothing to stir us. I take it that these seasons of especial dreariness for the world at large are the blissful periods of life for those in power. The happiness of the nations that have no history is a proverb; and from such data we may in a measure compute the enjoyment of those rulers of men who see the machine of Government do its work at half-boiler power, with little friction and scarcely any wear.

On the Continent of Europe there is a quiet almost like a lethargy. The alarms of war have subsided, not exactly because a better understanding has succeeded, but that each feels that he who should be the first to break the peace must array the public opinion of Europe against him; and now that the newspapers repeat themselves so exactly that the press of Prussia is reproduced in Spain, and that the same sort of appeal is heard on the Neva and on the Tiber, there is a uniformity in the popular judgments of Europe that has never been seen heretofore.

In France, perhaps, the state of

insecurity still prevails. The experiment of constitutional government is yet on its trial; or rather it is still to be seen how far the Emperor will continue his experiment. The great question being, Will he so replace the old machinery by the new, as to make a return to the old mode of progression impossible? or is he merely using the Ollivier Ministry as an auxiliary screw, to be lifted and stowed away when he has worked off from the ugly lee-shore of a revolution, and is M. Rouher only waiting for ample sea-room to take the helm and command the ship? Of the two courses I should not call the latter the less probable. To carry on the government of France without official candidates seems like abrogating the empire, where the first of official candidates is the head of the State. In the present temper of France there are few Imperialists would like to subject the Emperor to the hazard of a re-election; and yet to abolish "official candidature" is going a very long way in this direction. To withdraw from the conduct of affairs the will of him who has hitherto directed the State, and to accept the not very well defined or clearly expressed wishes of dissatisfied millions as to how they would like to be ruled, is an experiment of unquestionable danger.

The French Emperor, however,

has a taste for "surprises," as strong as though he were a popular dramatist; and he loves "a transformation scene" with all the ardour of a pantomimist; and although a *coup d'état* is not always sure of full success on repetition, he is too clever a mechanist not to vary the machinery and present totally new effects at the fall of the curtain; and I should be very sorry to lay heavy odds that M. Daru might not yet make a sea-voyage in company with M. Rochefort, or that M. Ollivier himself might not be the daily companion and associate of Ledru Rollin, linked to him by ties even stronger than those of party. In Prussia all is expectancy. M. Bismark is said to be "waiting." He is waiting for South Germany to pronounce—waiting for Russia to declare her policy—waiting for the completion of a Prussian fleet—waiting for France to be embroiled with the Imperials—waiting for Italy to lose patience about Rome, and treat defiantly with the Tuileries—and waiting for Austria to be so terrified about her Slavac population, that she will consent to forget the treaty of Prague, and only bargain for a little present succour.

If Prussia is waiting for much, Austria is waiting for everything. All her reforms have come so rapidly and unexpectedly, that the Minister of Justice does not well know what is law; nor can the Minister of War determine whether there is or is not an army: while as to the Church, there is not a member of the Cabinet could tell you whether they have or have not thrown off the Pope, or how far the Concordat is a law or a lie in the empire!

As for Italy, she waits "for Rome." For many years she waited for Venice—sighed for it—sung for it—imposed fresh taxes, and went to war for it; and yet when she got it, what has she done for it, or done with it? If it was ruinous under the Austrians, what is it now? Did it ever present an aspect more

desolate and deserted; was its poverty ever greater, its wretchedness more pitiable? Its crumbling palaces are covered over with bills, "To belet;" and the only movement in the thoroughfares is the passage of some American tourists!

In England, too, we are waiting—waiting for almost all that a nation can want or wish for. Waiting to be educated—to be fed at home or sent abroad—waiting for an army and a fleet—waiting for the ballot—waiting for a Tory leader in the Lords, and a little obedience to law in Ireland. This attitude of expectancy, to which anxiety imparts no zeal nor eagerness lends any interest, seems the especial temper of the time. There is no excitement, but there is no ease. There is not the warmth and glow of contest, nor is there the peaceful sense of tranquillity and repose. The dulness of Europe is like the dulness of old age—the gradual indisposition to be amused as we once were amused—to take pleasure in the objects that interested us of old. Even the old alarm-cries no longer excite us! We hear without terror that Russia is creeping on towards northern India; and we listen to Dr Cumming's predictions about the seventh vial with something of the same indifference.

In fact the world is dull as—a dinner-party! and with the self-same dulness; for in our epidemic dreariness we are all labouring with the same symptoms, and each of us experiences in himself the apathetic weariness he sees in his neighbour. And is this your experience of dinner-parties, Mr O'Dowd? I think I hear you ask; and I answer frankly, I am afraid it is. There is a dreary cloud over the world just now, and even the pleasant people seem so conscious of its influence that they no more try to dispel it by any effort of agreeability than would a pyrotechnist attempt a display of fireworks in a fog.

Were I composing a prophetic

almanac at this moment, I should certainly say, "Expect nothing lively about this time. There will be few jokes current. A new edition

of 'Proverbial Philosophy' will be announced, and there will be a petition against Bernal Osborne's return for Waterford."

A PROTESTANT RELIEF BILL.

If I were disposed to turn agitator—a line of life for which I feel little vocation—I should certainly seize the present opportunity to endeavour to raise a cry in favour of Protestant Emancipation in Ireland.

I know well that the moment is not propitious. I feel that the sympathies of Englishmen are not just now strongly enlisted on their side; and I can see that amongst the needs of the party at present in power, is the great necessity of petting Romanism, and discouraging, if not disparaging, the members of the Reformed Church.

It is not, certainly, at the moment when a Government is hourly weakening the ties of connection between the two countries, that the merits of those who were strenuous to maintain the union could be advantageously insisted on. Nor is it a time when one of the difficulties of a Cabinet consists in how far they may weaken the Queen's rule in Ireland without absolutely confessing that country to be ungovernable, that one would reasonably hope for merciful consideration for those who, insulted, neglected, or outraged, still professed to believe that there were benefits in the connection with England. But yet I do think some at least of the prejudices entertained against Protestants might be fairly met; and that, looking to the patient submission they have shown under the disfavour they have incurred, the uncomplaining spirit in which they have seen themselves passed over in promotion, their religious disability being used as the means of excluding them from office or advancement—I say I do think that the natural kind-heartedness of Eng-

lishmen, and their love of fair-play together, would dispose them to inquire, at least, what there is in the Reformed Faith that should shut men out from the high rewards of public life? why a Protestant should not be a judge or a magistrate? or what peculiarity in his belief should suggest distrust of his loyalty, or a doubt of the undivided allegiance he offers to his Sovereign? It was not till after a very long struggle, maintained by some of the ablest men of the age, that the Catholic Relief Bill was carried. The measure confessedly was yielded at last rather from the difficulty of further opposing it, than from any distinct admission that the claim had been made out. Let us, then, take the points alleged against the Romanists, and see if they do not admit of the same honest construction when applied to Protestants, and let us see if there would be a real peril to the Crown or the Constitution in admitting the followers of the Established—or rather disestablished—Church, to places of honour or trust under the monarchy. First of all, we are told that by concessions to the "Protestants" we are endangering the condition of the Catholic Church; and I at once fall back upon Lord Plunkett, and ask, What is this apprehended danger? Is it in Parliament or out of Parliament? Do you believe that any number of persons let in would be strong enough to overrule the Catholics, and pull down their Church? "These apprehensions," he adds, "are not the fruits of wholesome caution, but the reveries of disordered brains." I conscientiously believe this to be true. The most ardent propagandist of Protestantism no longer speculates on the con-

version of his Roman Catholic countrymen; and I believe that Cardinal Cullen might travel in Dr Tresham Gregg's company from Fairhead to Valentia without any attempt on his theological virtue.

The next argument after this was, that "the people of England were against the measure;" and here Lord Plunkett says, that by the Act of Union the Catholics of Ireland were led to expect that greater facilities would be accorded to them. This is just my case for the Protestants; for they were not only led to expect, but taught to believe and to rely on the assurances of England, that they should not be deserted, nor left in the minority to struggle against the overwhelming force of a tyrant majority.

One of Pitt's arguments for the Union was, that an English, because a Protestant Parliament, would have less difficulty in dealing with the Catholic claims than an Irish Parliament, where the nation was Catholic, and only the governing class Protestant. Even Pitt, however, did not foresee the time when both the numbers and the ruling power should stand on one and the same side.

The conduct of the Roman Catholics was resorted to as a reason against concessions. So, too, have we heard how certain humble men walking in procession—some revival of a memory, where their fathers' gallantry had signalised their devotion to the Crown of England—have been adduced as grounds for their repression, and sufficient argument to show how dangerous might be such loyalty; and, of course, it cannot be denied that these men are but little attentive to the signs of the times—that they are but careless observers of the altered spirit of England towards them, and rather live in the memories of what their forefathers had achieved, than in the consciousness of the neglect into which they themselves have fallen. Good taste and moderation are not the invariable characteristics of

popular demands; and these poor people—once petted and pampered, now slighted and insulted—may have occasionally given way to expressions more consonant with injured pride and outraged feeling than with consummate state-craft; but then, as Lord Plunkett observed before, "All these things are imputable to the conduct of the Government; you have compelled these men to rally round constitutional privileges, and make common cause." "If this measure," he continues, "be utterly inadmissible, you are bound to say so"—bound, I would add, not to amuse the Protestants with the idea that they are to be longer tolerated, or that their Church, crippled and maimed as it is, will be supported even with that modified subsidy which, like the dividend in a bankruptcy, only serves to furnish materials for calculating the original debt. You are bound to suppress that fever of the public mind that comes of alternate hope and fear, and let them know that by governing Ireland according to Irish ideas you understand the ignoring of all that is not Romanist, or that attaches any value to English connection, or any love or affection for England.

Once more my Lord Plunkett: "This is no subject for compromise. Either this claim is forbidden by some principle too sacred to be tampered with, or it is enjoined by a law of justice which it is oppression to resist." I repeat it: the Irish Catholics—I mean the Irish Protestants—have not been fairly dealt with. The Government has not in any instance come into amicable contact with them. It has not consulted, soothed, nor directed them. It has addressed them only in the stern language of the law, in State prosecution, and charged them with the anger which has been kindled by such treatment. It has confiscated their Church, accused their once ascendancy—in other words, their loyalty—as the bane of Ireland, de-

nounced their fidelity as an aggression, and called their influence an insult to national feeling. Is it likely, said the great advocate of the Catholic claims, that these men should exercise any fastidious delicacy in the selection of their friends? And so do I ask, Why wonder if you have such men as Mr Johnston as the representative of an Orange constituency? Is not the very choice a wild cry of angry defiance—a passionate shriek from the brave crew you have deserted and abandoned, and who prefer any chances rather than those of trusting to your mercy?

All that was once imputed to the Roman Catholic, on the ground of his allegiance to the Pope, is now ascribed to the Protestant on the supposed plea of "ascendancy." It is this ascendancy that has insulted the Church of the majority, rack-rented the peasantry, excited them to acts of crime and vengeance, and finally driven them to rebellion. Of course this is not very difficult to assert, nor very hard to dilate upon. Still, if the allegation were as true and well founded as it is notoriously false, the thing exists no longer. Everything that claimed to be Protestant in the land has been placed under proscription: the Church abolished; the rights of property, largely Protestant, invaded; the University founded under a Protestant charter, and maintained chiefly by grants of Protestant donors, menaced with confiscation. Where, then, is there any remnant of that terrible ascendancy which has haunted the dreams of Romanist bishops and made the Irish peasant a Fenian?

We were often warned of the dangerous discontent of those who saw not alone themselves, but also the "*nati natorum et qui nascuntur ab illis*," stigmatised as a caste, and to be for ever excluded from honour, station, and confidence—surely we might recognise some peril for those who have been deposed from their places of honour and trust, and

told to "stand by" as persons attainted and discredited, and for no other reason than that their loyalty has become offensive to men who give fewer guarantees for their fidelity, and who only acknowledge "a conditional attachment" to English rule.

I do propose, and I have no more eloquent words than Plunkett's to do it in, to "take the brand from these men's foreheads, and the bitterness from their hearts, and the debasement from their minds. Do not drive your Protestant brother from the bar as a sulky discontented outcast." I do not claim for him the highest offices of the State. I am not vain enough to hope he may be a Lord Chancellor, nor have I the pretension to expect that he will be chosen by any constituency as their representative. To take Sydney Smith's words: "Keep them from Parliament if you think it right, but do not therefore exclude them from everything else to which you think they might be admitted without danger; and as to their discontent, there is no sort of reason why it should not be lessened, though it cannot be removed." And again: "A distinction is taken by one of the most feeble noblemen in Great Britain between persecution and the deprivation of political power, whereas there is no more distinction between these two things than there is between him who makes the distinction and a booby. What nonsense is this! Degradation is as great an evil as bodily pain, or as severe poverty." It is by no means impossible that to be deprived of his office as a sheriff, and to be removed from the bench as a magistrate, may be regarded by a country gentleman as a degradation, and all for no graver reason than the expression of his opinion on the wisdom of certain acts of the Government. Surely in a country like ours, where so much is conceded to the press, some little latitude might be permitted to spoken opinion;

not to say that where the fierce language of the 'Nation' and the 'Irishman' are tolerated and endured, a little forgiveness might be extended to the warmth of one whose greatest error was to have forgotten that his loyalty had grown old-fashioned. After all, it will take some time to convince the province of Ulster that "The Boyne Water" is not a rebel ballad.

I ask for leniency in dealing with these men's derelictions, because they are foolish enough still to fancy themselves the friends of British connection, and supporters of the monarchy! A little time will of course teach them their error. Meanwhile, if the Protestant is neither to be raised to the Bench nor promoted to high place at the Bar—if he is to be sparingly chosen for the Legislature, and grudgingly selected for any position of trust—let the profession

of medicine, at least, be open since law is closed and divinity suppressed; and, in the humble walk of a dispensary doctor, let not his belief in the Thirty-Nine Articles be a bar to his dealing with the pharmacopœia!

I know that there are prejudices against these concessions, and I can feel all the force of those who argue against the impolicy of disturbing that blessed peacefulness that now pervades Ireland, and shaking the confidence of those who are with such heartfelt sincerity reciprocating "our message of peace." Still I would say, in your present treatment of what you call ascendancy, you are simply "flogging a dead horse;" and it is but a sorry reason to insult the Protestants of Ireland, that they cared so much for British connection that they actually quarrelled with their own countrymen to maintain it.

THE STATE, THE POOR, AND THE COUNTRY.

THE British nation has entered upon a new political era. And every such period, ere it passes away, leaves a memorable record of its existence in new, important, and it may be startling acts of legislation. A new power has been introduced into our political system,—new forces are at work within the pale of the Constitution. The Government has become National in the fullest sense of the word; and, with the change, a new breath of life is stirring Society. New views are rapidly forming; new hopes and aspirations are entering into the heart of the masses. The rule of the Middle Classes, established by the Reform Bill of 1832, has come to an end; and the doctrines which regulated the legislation of that period are now being tested and considered from a different, indeed opposite, point of view. For nearly forty years the prime object

of our legislation has been the interests of the Consumers; *now*, we shall soon have the masses advocating their own interests as Producers. What is more, the State has now become simply the Nation itself, acting through a chosen body of administrators; and it is easy to discern that under the new *régime* the Government will be called upon to adopt a very different policy in domestic affairs from that represented by the principle of the Whigs and Doctrinaires, which has been paramount since 1832. That principle well suited the interests of the wealthy and comparatively fortunate classes, who needed no help from the State, yet who got all they asked for, by the abolition of all customs-duties which shackled their business. But will that principle keep its ground now that the weaker classes also have a voice in the Govern-

ment? Will they not maintain that they, as an integral part of the Nation, have a claim to be fully considered in the policy of the Government; and that, if they can point out any system of Governmental action which will benefit them, without doing injustice to the rest of the community, no doctrinaire limitations upon the action of the State shall be allowed to stand in the way? The maxims of the Liberals, which have been predominant since 1832, will be thrown into the crucible, and tried anew. Already, in vague murmurs which ere long will become distinct and earnest speech, the masses are beginning to say that the principles which have been in vogue during the rule of the Middle Classes will not suit them. "Our interests," they say, "are those of Producers, not of Consumers. We also are poor, and you are wealthy; we are weak, and you are strong: with us employment is a far more precarious thing than it is with you, and we have but small savings to fall back upon when out of work. State-help, though not needful to the middle classes, is needed at times by us; and we shall never rest contented until that principle is acknowledged and properly applied."

Unless we misinterpret the signs of the times, our Statesmen are entering upon a trying period, and one in which they will find more work on their shoulders than they have been accustomed to. It is a time—a crisis—which will sift the chaff from the wheat, and discern sharply and clearly between the two classes of men commingled in every Ministry—between men whose only merit is skilful debating power, and those who really possess the gift of statesmanship. It is not without uneasiness that we regard the political crisis now drawing near,—the ripening crop of new views, interests, and aspirations, backed by the still-unused power of the masses. In regard to

the movement itself—the awakening of the masses to political thought and their entry upon political power—so far from dreading it, we hail it as an event as desirable as it is inevitable,—as a healthy action of the national mind, and one which, by compelling us to test and reconsider our legislative principles from a new point of view, will greatly assist the ever-desirable work of shaping the Administration of the country in a manner most consonant with the fair claims and just wants of the nation as a whole. It is natural and self-flattering to think that our past and still-existing legislation has all been framed in this manner,—and we certainly do not believe that our legislators have ever consciously done otherwise; but we cannot lay the flattering unction to our souls, that our domestic policy has not been *mistaken* in some respects when viewed in connection with the interests of the nation as a whole, and, still more, eminently *defective*, leaving undone many things which a rightly-constituted State ought to have done. We should be false to the opinions again and again expressed in the Magazine if we hesitated to say this frankly, and also unjust to the Conservative party, whose traditional policy has been to uphold the National interests in opposition to the doctrinaire system of policy established by the Whigs, and now adopted by the main body of their Radical allies.

What are the cries which are now heard among the working classes—the vast section of the community now at length admitted to a direct share in the government of the country? What are the questions which they are pondering, and which ere long they will reason out for themselves, and press upon the attention of Parliament? Foremost among these are the Colonial question, Emigration, the Poor-laws, and "Free-trade with Reciprocity." How often have these questions been dealt

with in the Magazine! How often, especially, did the late Sir Archibald Alison, in these pages, earnestly and eloquently advocate these questions in the interests, not of any class or party, but of the Nation at large! The whole current of the time was against him. The doctrinaire system of the Liberals was then supreme: but honestly and manfully he advocated his views, developing a truly Imperial policy, by which the Colonies were to form a real part of the empire, held to the mother country by a system of reciprocal advantages; by which a State system of Emigration was to relieve the labour-market at home, reducing also the burden of Poor-rates, and ceaselessly adding to the population and resources of the Colonies, who have ever been our best customers, the largest consumers of our exported manufactures. We need not speak of his long and steady advocacy of the interests of the Producing classes in this country, as endangered by the extreme and one-sided system of so-called Free-trade established by the Liberals. He maintained that in Free-trade, like everything else, there are limits beyond which the advantages which it confers on some classes are more than counterbalanced by the loss which it inflicts on others. Nor must we forget the warm interest which he ever took in the interests of the Working classes and of the Poor; so much so, that even in his great History, while depicting the Reign of Terror when at its worst, he pauses in his narrative of crime and horrors to praise Robespierre for the "noble spirit" of his proposed Poor-law.*

Emigration and the state of our Poor-laws are naturally the foremost questions in the thoughts of the

working classes at the present time. The lamentable depression of trade, and consequent want of employment, which have recently prevailed, have now reached a most serious magnitude in many of the larger towns, and most of all in London and its far-spreading suburbs. The intensity of the distress in the metropolitan districts has not been equalled in recent times. And the break-down of our Poor-law system, despite all the efforts of voluntary associations, has been absolutely appalling in its results. Not a week passes without several cases of "deaths from starvation," duly attested by the verdict of coroners' inquests, where the medical and other evidence reveals an amount of unaided wretchedness and starvation which one would suppose impossible in a civilised country. Men, women, and children dying from sheer famine in the heart of the wealthiest city of the world!—how inadequate must our Poor-laws be when so shocking a spectacle is of frequent recurrence! And what does the Government do? What measures does it take to remedy, or even mitigate, this unusually severe and widespread distress among the lower classes? None at all. Even when directly appealed to in Parliament, the Government adheres to the vaunted Liberal doctrine of *laissez-faire*. It prates about the "established principles of economical science" (what are they?) It takes credit for leaving everything to be settled by "the law of supply and demand,"—as if that "law" (of which we have heard so much during the last thirty-five years of Liberal rule) ever brought help to the helpless, clothes to the naked, or a morsel of food to men

* "*Fas est et ab hoste doceri*" is Alison's remark after stating the provisions of the proposed law. And he adds: "The true principles of the management of the poor are to be found in this Report of the Committee of Public Salvation; and regular Governments will never act so wisely for their own as well as for their people's interest, as when they take this leaf out of the book of their enemies."—History of Europe, vol. iii. p. 292 (8vo edition, 1859).

dying of starvation. We remember, during the terrible famine in Orissa, that when some of the Government officials acted on the so-called "established principles of economical science," and left the people to die in hundreds, they were censured in the strongest (yet not too strong) terms by the Indian Government, and were condemned unanimously by the English public. Yet is not our own Government now culpable in the same way? Surely the break-down of the Poor-law in this case ought to have incited the Government to the adoption of prompt measures of relief, even if those were of an exceptional kind. Yet nothing will move them; and even a direct motion in Parliament for State-help to alleviate the widespread distress by means of emigration, has been repelled by the whole force of the Government.

The argument for State-help to the working classes, in the present dilemma, is peculiarly strong; for the Government itself has greatly swelled the number of the unemployed, and at this moment is adding several thousands more to the list. Since the present "Liberal" Ministry came into power, it has dismissed several thousands of workmen from the National dockyards, has largely reduced the men employed in the Navy, and has likewise dismissed, or is in process of dismissing, upwards of twenty thousand men hitherto employed as soldiers. All these able-bodied men—many of them with families dependent upon them—have been thrown out of work by the Government at a time when the labour-market is wholly overstocked, and when an unusual amount of distress prevails among the working classes. We do not think that all these reductions are desirable; and even if desirable, there was certainly no necessity for making them at the present moment. But then the Gladstone Cabinet desire to make an ostentatious display of their

"economy" by showing a large surplus in the Budget. What good will that do to the unemployed and starving workmen? None whatever. What help will a reduction of the income-tax and the tea and sugar duties afford to the unemployed who have barely money to buy bread? Nay, even as regards the working classes as a body, how small will be the fraction of gain that will reach them! Whatever it be, it certainly will not compensate them for the depression in the labour-market produced by the competition of the thirty thousand able-bodied men recently, or now in the process of being dismissed from the Government service.

The recent Parliamentary debate and division on the Emigration question appear to us in almost every respect unsatisfactory, alike in the interests of Government and of the masses of our population. The so-called Liberal Cabinet, in adhering to the old principle of the Whigs on the Emigration question, are supported by the Manchester school of politicians, who in this matter have two objects in view—namely, a desire to sever the Colonies from the mother country (thereby reducing England to a helpless position among the great Powers of the world, so as to compel us to adopt a permanent policy of peace at any price), and also to keep down wages in this country by retaining a redundant population. It is a significant fact, that the motion in favour of State-help to emigration was supported entirely by the younger politicians on either side of the House, in conjunction with representatives of large urban constituencies; and the speech of the evening was unquestionably that of Lord George Hamilton, the member for Middlesex, and the most promising of the juniors of the Conservative party. This fact of itself is worthy of notice. The older politicians in the House are either content with the present system of things, which has been so

long established under the rule of the Whigs and Liberals, or at least they are so indifferent on this subject as to refrain from opposing it by their votes, or even questioning it in debate. They appear to be blind to the new forces at work, and to the new spirit which ere long must be infused into the Government of this country, if that Government is to remain stable and the masses contented.

In old States with a large population, Emigration is the great safety-valve by which poverty and discontent are prevented from accumulating to an extent dangerous to the welfare of the community. In our own little islands this has been notoriously the case. Population will increase among the poorer classes quite as much as among the upper and middle classes. This is a fact which must be accepted—it cannot be prevented. And as the area of our islands is small, it is impossible that Employment can go on increasing in the same ratio as population does. Hence, but for Emigration, ere this our country would have been burdened by a mass of poverty and discontent which would not have failed to produce most calamitous consequences.

The whole policy of the present Government towards the Colonies shows plainly that the idea of State-aid to Emigration never once entered their thoughts. It is also well known that the leading members of the Cabinet—Gladstone, Bright, and Lowe—adhere firmly to the principle of their Whig predecessors. These two facts naturally cast a doubt upon the genuineness of the excuses, and upon the impartiality of the arguments, by which they defended themselves during the recent debate. One of those excuses was, that the Colonies were averse to receive any emigrants sent out by

State-help. But was this project ever fairly brought before the Colonial Governments? It was not—it could not have been. Indeed, with what face could a Cabinet which is doing its best to throw off the Colonies, which is withdrawing from them every regiment and ship, and telling them as plainly as it dare do that we want to get rid of our Colonies altogether as a burden and an expense,—how could such a Cabinet enter upon negotiations with the Colonial Governments on this important question of Emigration? The project, in fact, runs counter to the Colonial policy of this Ministry, and also to the selfish doctrines of the Manchester school. By the recent successful division, the Cabinet has got rid of the question for the moment; but it will not be for long. And we sincerely trust that Parliament will duly consider the matter betimes; for if this is not done, the result will be a great popular movement which will be most dangerous to the rights of property at home.

Holding the views above expressed, we greet with satisfaction a recently-published work, which, in brief compass, treats very fully of the duties of the State in regard to the social and material interests of the country.* It is an expression of the new school of ideas and principles relative to the Governmental action of the State. It develops a wide scheme of work for the State, not merely in relation to the working classes and the poor, but also in relation to the general interests of the Nation as a whole. In his 'Science of Finance,' Mr Patterson has shown himself a resolute opponent of all unnecessary interference of the State in affairs of private industry and enterprise, —because such affairs do not come within its province, nor is the State well fitted for their administration. He holds that the State should not

* 'The State, the Poor, and the Country: including Suggestions on the Irish Question.' By R. H. Patterson, author of the 'Science of Finance,' &c.

engage in any business nor undertake any duty which can be equally, or even approximately, well done by the public. Nevertheless there are many cases in which the intervention of the State is not only justifiable, but urgently needed, for the sake of the moral and social wellbeing of the community. "The object of a Government," he says, "is to do for a community what the community cannot do for itself." In these few words we have the whole and sole *raison d'être* of a Government. Mr Patterson evidently does not accept the doctrine of "every one for himself and the devil take the hindmost." Such a state of matters may prevail in rude and barbarous countries; but it is a principle wholly out of place in a civilised country, in the organised life of a rightly-constituted Nation. It is quite alien in such communities,—it is wholly opposed to the Social principle,—it is, in fact, its antithesis, and in practice its worst enemy. "A Nation is a unit: all classes alike must share its burdens in proportion to their means." "Mutual aid," he says again, "is the fundamental basis of every rightly-constituted society." "It should be with society as with the body, 'If one member suffers, all suffer.'"

We cannot follow our author through the various plans which he proposes for accomplishing his double project of (1) developing the productive power of the People (or, as he otherwise puts it, "making every man of our labouring class in the future worth two in the past"), and (2) of augmenting the natural resources of the Country. Some of his proposals under the first head appear to us to be conceived in too hopeful a spirit as regards the character of our working classes, and to be too difficult to be realised in the present state of society. But they are all desirable *per se*; and it is possible, nay probable, that the difficulties which seem to render

some of them impracticable at present, will ere long be lessened or disappear. We have only to look back upon the past progress of society and civilisation in order to perceive how many things which are difficult, and appear almost "utopian" to one age, are ere long easily accomplished in the onward and upward progress of humanity.

If Mr Patterson's views upon emigration and the treatment of the poor remind us of those so eloquently and powerfully advocated in these pages by the late Sir Archibald Alison, his views upon the question of Railways for Ireland not less forcibly recall to mind the statesmanlike proposals of the late Lord George Bentinck (then leader of the Conservative party in the House of Commons) upon the same subject. The Liberals succeeded in defeating Lord George Bentinck's proposal,—just as, alike in previous and past years, they have ever opposed State-help to the working classes by emigration. In like manner, also, they have done their best—and now more than ever—to cast off our splendid colonial empire, the grandest and most wonderful product of England's life and enterprise, and to reduce the British empire to the limit of our own little isles. Had the Conservative party been predominant during the last forty years, as the Whigs and Liberals have been, we make bold to say that ere this the Mother Country and the Colonies would have been firmly united by the bonds of mutual advantages,—forming a vast empire, with well-arranged political relations, and commercially united as a Zollverein, which in treaty for freedom of trade with other countries could by its very magnitude obtain equal reciprocal advantages, instead of giving all and getting nothing, as has been the case under the doctrinaire system of the Liberals. The old Tory policy of maintaining the National interests above all, and of fostering the growth and re-

sources of our empire (Home and Colonial) as a unit, might still have remained in force; whereas under the theorising and doctrinaire system of the Whigs, the splendid fabric of British power has been loosened, until it now has little more cohesion than a rope of sand. "Give the Political Economists (so self-styled) an empire of granite," said the great Napoleon, "and they will quickly reduce it to powder!" What words can more fittingly describe the result of thirty-eight years of Liberal ascendancy upon the fortunes of the British empire? The "political economy" which the Whigs have taught England to worship is a bastard progeny, a crabbed offshoot of the true science, — a science which must ever be based upon the actual circumstances of the country to whose government it is applied, and not a mere set of theories which the Liberals apply indiscriminately, and whose operation they scorn to subject to any limitations, — even though the practice of every other country in the world warns them that in so doing they are wrong.

In his earnest advocacy of the schemes of Governmental action which he sets forth, Mr Patterson appeals to all parties in the State alike. He says with emphasis that it is no party question, but a "National question in the fullest meaning of the term." In one sense we agree with him. A scheme of State-action for extending the area of employment, and augmenting the natural resources of the country, is really a National question. But to what party must the country look for the carrying out of such a policy? Will it, can it, ever be done by the Liberals? who would make the Government a body by itself, standing aloof from the interests of the masses, leaving the helpless and the unemployed (even those of its own making) to struggle on as they best may, and turning with disdain from every proposal for State-action, the adoption of which would

combine help for the unemployed with a permanent benefit to the country at large. In marked contrast to this heartless school of political doctrinaires stand the Conservatives, whose traditional policy is that of supporting the great National interests of the country, — whose special aim and desire is to confer material benefits upon the people, while the grand stock-in-trade of the Liberals is sentimental and sectarian grievances.

It is in the general history of a party that the essential spirit of its policy is best manifested, and we have shown from the evidence of the past how widely the administrative policy of the Tories and Conservatives upon great national questions has differed from that of the Whigs and Liberals. But even take this *beau-ideal* of Liberal Cabinets which now reigns in Downing Street, and rules supreme in the House of Commons. What care do they take of National interests, or of those of the toiling masses of the population? We have already spoken of their conduct towards the Colonies, and need not recur to it. But see what "political economy" is doing for us at home. For years, for generations, the State has fostered economy among the lower classes by taking care of their savings, even at some small expense to itself. And alike in spirit and in principle (although the details may have been imperfect) this system is as wise as it is generous, for thereby many hundreds of our population have been saved from coming on the poor's-roll. But the present Chancellor of the Exchequer desires to put an end to this small help to the lower classes. In obedience to "the established doctrine of economical science," he would reduce the rate of interest at present paid to depositors in the Savings Banks. He says the loss to the State by the present system is £120,000 a-year. But this statement gives a most erroneous view of the facts of the case. Nine-tenths of this loss is

not due to the present rate of interest, but represents the interest on the "loss" incurred in the old Tory times, when the Government did not shrink from favouring economy among the working classes even at some small expense to the State. Let any one examine what has been the interest on Consols during the last quarter of a century, and he will find that, at the present rate of interest ($3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent) paid by the Savings Banks, the "loss" (so to call it), to the State could not be more than £10,000 a-year at the most; and as a set-off against this, must be placed the £400,000 of balances in the hands of the State, and for which it pays no interest! Moreover, if it were thought right to allow a portion of the Savings Banks' deposits to be invested in the State-debt of India, there would be no loss at all. Yet, for the sake of avoiding this almost nominal loss, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, by reducing the rate of interest on the savings of the poorer classes, would throw a damper on the self-denying economy of the very class among whom economy of any kind is most rare, yet is most of all to be desired. It is not merely the loss of interest to these poor depositors that has to be taken into account, but the moral effect of the change, the damper thrown upon them. Unquestionably they will think themselves unfairly, or at all events harshly dealt with, and in resentment will abandon their present habits of saving. This is "political economy," as understood and worshipped by the Liberals! For the sake of making a gain to the State of £10,000 a-year, or less, this *beau-ideal* of Liberal Cabinets would wrench this sum from the most deserving portion of the poorer classes, and, as a necessary consequence, would increase the Poor-rates to a far greater extent. The Chancellor of the Exchequer defends this proposal of his by saying, that he "*does not know any principle by which one*

portion of the community should pay for the benefit of another." Why, then, should there be any Poor-rates at all? Still more, why any Education-rate? Such reasoning is really too preposterous.

Look, too, at the mode in which the Government has dealt with the large dismissals of men by the Admiralty and the War-Office. We do not object to any reduction in the national defences that is proved to be necessary. In the present case, we believe that the reductions in the national armaments, and in the Government offices also, have been carried too far. And in regard to the time and manner in which those curtailments have been effected, there is hardly an unprejudiced man in the country, whether Tory or Radical, who can approve of the Government policy. By withdrawing our ships and regiments from the colonies and other parts of the empire, and at the same time declaring them unnecessary at home, and by wholesale dismissals of workmen from our national dockyards, thirty thousand able-bodied men have been thrown out of the public service, and cast forth upon the ordinary labour-market of the country; and this at a time when the labour-market is wholly overstocked, and thousands even of skilled workmen seek vainly for employment of any kind, and have to beg bread for themselves and for their families at the Workhouse. What chance, then, have these thousands of men dismissed from the public service of getting employment? We may say roundly, None whatever. And in so far as they do find employment, it can only be at the cost of the whole working classes, by the reduction of wages which the competition of those thousands of new suppliants for work will necessarily produce in a labour-market already grievously overstocked.

Not one of the soldiers and sailors thus dismissed could have left the public service of his own accord.

They were bound to serve the State for a period of years, and they could not have released themselves from this engagement in order to enter upon other work and engagements, however profitable these might be. The engagement, in fact, between the State and our soldiers and sailors, is what lawyers call "unilateral:" it binds the men, but not the State which has engaged their services. The State keeps them remorselessly to the engagement as long as it pleases,—it can keep them whether they like or not. In such circumstances, surely, the State is morally bound to exercise its power of dismissing these men with some little consideration for their interests. We hear a great deal at present about "fixity of tenure," "compensation for loss of occupancy," &c., for the Irish; and Irish tenants, though free to throw up their farms whenever they please, are to be granted an enormous "compensation" whenever a proprietor chooses to make a change in the occupancy of his farm, even though he should simply take it into his own hands. This is "justice to Ireland." But surely some respect should be paid by the Government itself to this principle, when dealing with its own *employés*, especially those to whom it denies the right of leaving its service except at long intervals. The State, in fact, takes a long lease of the soldiers and sailors whom it employs, yet holds itself at liberty to break that lease whenever it suits its own interests to do so. We do not object to this state of things, for we do not see how it can well be remedied. But we repeat most emphatically that the right of the State to make wholesale dismissals of those men ought to be exercised with some respect to moral obligations and fair-play, as between man and man. And we maintain that to summarily dismiss some thirty thousand men from the public service—especially at a time of distress like the pre-

sent—is an act which would require to be supported by reasons of State necessity of the very strongest kind, such as certainly do not exist in the present case. We make bold to say that the conduct of the Government in this matter is far more tyrannous and transgressive of moral duty than any evictions of Irish tenants which they can point to in support of their Irish Land Bill.

It is acknowledged that the artisans in the dockyards worked at lower wages than are usual in private establishments, being content to do so out of regard to the comparative permanency of employment in the public service. The same thing is true to a far greater degree in the case of the clerks in the Admiralty and other Government offices. The supposed permanency of the employment has hitherto induced men to enter the service at a lower rate of pay than is usual in private offices. Moreover, there is a fixed rate of increase for their salaries in proportion to their length of service: and surely, to summarily dismiss those men, and thereby prevent their attaining the future increase of pay which formed one of the terms of the engagement, is a breach of moral obligation only excusable upon grounds of urgent State-necessity. Mr Childers boasts that he has saved £32,000 by summarily dismissing 124 clerks from the Admiralty. But does he think that the nation congratulates itself upon such a gain? Does he think that this paltry sum gained for the tax-payers will compensate for the loss and suffering inflicted upon these six score clerks and their hapless families? Does he think that the penny per head thus saved to the tax-payers can possibly give satisfaction to them when they think of the misery of the poor clerks by whose dismissal this addition to the year's surplus has been obtained?

It is important to take note at once whether this "Liberal" policy

is leading us. Get a large surplus : that is the sole maxim of the present Cabinet. A large surplus, suffer who may. And what are the means by which this object is attained? In the first place, the ordinary revenue-payments are forestalled: the public have now to pay for what they have not used. Moreover, the taxation is made onerous out of proportion to its amount, by being levied in large sums, instead of being, as hitherto, spread over the year. So much for the new Liberal mode of assessment. Next observe what section of the nation specially suffers from the financial policy of the present Ministry. It is the working classes,—and next to them the lower section of the middle class. The enormous reductions of the army and navy (dockyards included) fall mainly upon the working classes; the reductions in the Government offices fall mainly upon a portion of the middle class. The proposed reduction in the rate of interest paid by the Savings Banks likewise falls upon the same classes. Even the pitiful economy by which no successor is to be appointed to Mr Tidd Pratt, is likewise made at the expense of the working classes, to whose interests he rendered great service by supervising (so far as his powers extended) the condition of the Benefit Societies, to whose keeping the working classes intrust by far the greatest part of their savings. The working classes already feel acutely the result of these State-economies; and they would be dull indeed if they did not take note of the remorseless spirit of the Liberal policy, when they see their Benefit Societies left unheeded, and the Savings-Bank rate of interest reduced, for the sake of a gain to the State which is absolutely pitiful. Moreover, when, in their present distress, they earnestly petition the Government for some small help to emigration, the whole force and eloquence of the Government are exerted to obtain from the House of Commons

a refusal of their prayer and a condemnation of the principle of State-help involved in it.

Now, we ask, what will be the upshot of this vaunted "Liberal" policy? The Government say, Our sole duty to the country is to reduce the amount of taxation, leaving every class to profit or suffer from it as they may. What is the corollary which the working classes will append to this maxim? Reduce—nay, wholly abolish the duties upon tea, sugar, &c., and the working classes will still be great losers by the Government policy. Not to speak of the open *neglect* of their interests shown by the measures of the Chancellor of the Exchequer above mentioned, the loss of wages to the working classes in consequence of the competition of the thousands of men dismissed from the Government service in a period of unusual lack of employment, will exceed by a hundred-fold any saving to be made by the reduction in the price of tea and sugar. They will say: "We object entirely to this system of State-economy: we object entirely to the principle that the only duty of the Government is to reduce taxation,—for it is we who specially suffer from the economies by which the Government is enabled to make their reductions." And what will follow? The working classes will say: "If the State is to economise chiefly at our expense, and even withdraw the little favours and general consideration which have hitherto, and only justly, been accorded to us; and if the State is to proclaim that its duty is to do nothing except reduce the taxation, leaving every class, the weak as much as the strong, to shift for itself: if, in short, the national system of taxation is to be the only form in which any State-help is to come to us, either in good times or in bad—then we say that the national system of taxation must be entirely remodelled." Remodelled!—revolutionised would be the fitter word. But how?

There can only be one answer to that question. By a *graduated* system of direct taxation. The lower section of the middle class will join with the working class in this question, and the popular cry will be not only that the income-tax should be graduated from bottom to top, but that all the other direct taxes (poor's-rate, house-tax, &c.,) should be graduated in similar fashion. This is the goal to which Mr Lowe's "clever" finance is leading, and strange to say, it will come as the consequence of his fanatical endeavours to establish the very opposite principle. He says,—“I can see no reason why one section of the community should pay to benefit another section ;” and on this ground he remorselessly insists upon making a trumpety gain to the State by reducing the rate of interest paid by the National Savings Banks, as also by repelling every proposal for State-aid to emigration. Was there ever such blindness? And the whole Cabinet shares the mental short-sightedness of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

We want a different policy altogether. A reduction of taxation is but a means to an end,—and that end is the comfort and contentment of the nation as a whole. A truly national system of government must ever pay full and careful regard to the lower classes, the weaker and less fortunate members of the community. It must ever shape the action of the State and the tenor of its legislation in consonance with the wants of the nation as a whole. Above all, it cannot ignore the ever-recurrent periods of distress among the labouring masses. And it is impossible, nor is it to be desired, that any system of administration of the public affairs which runs counter to this principle can be lasting. It will provoke a recoil of sentiment, and a great popular movement which will sweep away such a system of narrow, heartless, and erroneous

administration; and in such a case the remedy, hastily adopted, is too likely to create evils of an opposite kind, perhaps as much to be deprecated as those which it supplants. Mark the difference between the goal to which the present Government policy is leading and that which is offered by the national system of policy which Mr Patterson proposes, and which in the main we heartily support. Let the State combine the interests of the poor with those of the country at large. Let it adopt a system of State works which, carried out gradually, will give employment for our able-bodied poor, instead of wasting their labour in the unproductive tasks and demoralising influence of the work houses. As the best boon to Ireland, and as a relief to the now overstocked labour-market, let it co-operate (by guarantee which will cost but a trifle at the outset, and which ere long will be repaid) in the construction of cheap railways, opening up the solitudes and developing the agricultural resources of the sister isle. Let it also make engineering surveys of the vast waste lands of Ireland, with a view to the gradual reclamation of those waste lands during those periods of distress among our labouring classes which are unfortunately only too sure to recur at intervals. Under such a system of administration, the necessity for State-help to emigration would be greatly diminished, especially as the working classes have little desire to expatriate themselves if they can find work at home; but whenever such a necessity arises, let it be promptly met, as the sole means *then* left for preventing the accumulation of a pauperised and discontented population, permanently feeding upon the revenues, and disturbing the peace and comfort of the nation.

We advocate this policy upon the permanent grounds of justice and wise statesmanship. But the man is short-sighted indeed, who does not mark, in the signs of the times,

the approach of a crisis in our domestic legislation which renders the prompt consideration of these views especially urgent. The weaker, poorer, but most numerous section of the nation, is now suffering under a widespread distress; and not only is that distress seriously augmented by the thousands of men thrown out of employment by the Government, but the appeal to the Government to mitigate this suffering of their own making, by helping a few hundreds of the sufferers to emigrate, is summarily and decisively rejected; and even the little favours which the lower classes have been in the habit of receiving from all former Governments, both as regards the National Savings Banks and their own Sick and Benefit Societies, are ruthlessly taken from them. It needs no seer to predict the end of such a system of administration as this—namely, a popular movement which will establish, probably in a most unwise form, a principle the very opposite to that which the present Ministry is now carrying to an extreme. To what Party, then, in the country—to which side of the House—are we to appeal? We are waved back scornfully from the Ministerial benches. The vast phalanx of Liberals of all shades who support the policy of the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer turn a deaf ear to our proposals. They support the maxim of their leaders that the poorer classes must shift for themselves, and that the sole object of Government in such matters is to reduce taxation, without taking any steps to mitigate the distress among the lower classes, which this policy of theirs is so greatly augmenting. But may we not turn with confidence to the Opposition, and appeal to the weakened but still powerful Conservative party to inaugurate a rival policy, and save the country from the perils into which the doctrinaire system of the Liberals is now leading us? The system which we

advocate is essentially that of the Conservative party. It is National in the truest sense of the term; it is practical, founded upon the wants of the community, as opposed to the theoretic system of government, which finds favour with the Liberals. It offers material benefits, not mere remedies for sentimental grievances. It deals with the nation as a whole, and makes the benefits which it confers upon the weaker classes a mean of equally and permanently improving the condition and resources of the country at large. If this be not a policy worthy of the Conservative party, and specially accordant with their principles, then all the political thinkers and leading writers of that Party have been wrong, and the world must wait to learn anew what the policy of that party is.

It is true that any proposals of this kind made by the Conservatives in Parliament will not *for the present* be successful. But what of that? The fortunes of any party are determined in the long-run by the wisdom and justice of its proposals. Let a party show itself possessed of the high qualities of statesmanship—of the power and ability to initiate a policy in harmony with the sympathies of the time and the actual requirements of the country, and it matters little whether or not immediate success attend its efforts. The Conservatives, when in office, never fail to distinguish themselves as able and popular administrators. But for more than twenty years they have been placed at a great disadvantage compared with their rivals, by the fact that they have been so little in office, and thereby have been prevented doing justice to their powers of statesmanship. But, let us ask, have they not magnified that disadvantage for themselves, by abandoning the initiation of measures whenever they were relegated to the Opposition benches? We acknowledge the important duty which the Conservatives have at

present to discharge, in opposing or seeking to improve the measures brought forward by the Liberal Cabinet. But no party can win a solid reputation simply by work of this kind. In order to become strong, and increase its numbers, a party must show itself capable of initiating good and statesmanlike measures in harmony with the growing wants and changing condition of the country. Believing, as we do, that the Conservatives are still faithful to their traditions as the great National party, we commend to their attention the following words of one of the most recent and not least distinguished Conservative writers:—"By acting on large views of social and economical truths, and of the good of the whole nation, as opposed to narrow class interests, the Conservatives may add to their county strength great reinforcements from the middle classes in towns, and from the working classes whom they have helped to enfranchise, and form on a wide basis a progressive and powerful Conservative party."*

But the momentous character of the subject with which we have been dealing, and of the issues at stake, make us unwilling to close our remarks in the language of party. Believing, as we do, that England is on the threshold of a crisis in her domestic affairs, we would appeal even to the Government itself to reconsider the mistaken course which it is so fanatically pursuing, and

not to repel into a dangerous channel popular forces, which, if wisely directed, might be made the means of improving alike the social and industrial condition of our country. Surely the country has had enough of the pitiful sectarian fights and squabbles which engage so largely the time and attention of the House of Commons. How strange is the bitterness, how unsatisfactory the importance, attached to University Tests Bills, Edinburgh Annuity-tax Bills, and the like, when the great wants of the nation are waiting for consideration. The relations between the State, the Poor, and the Country, are really the grandest question of the times, and one which will increase in magnitude, if not also in difficulty and in peril, with every delay. If Parliament does not deal with this question promptly, we fear the solution of it, when it comes, will not take the form, nor be conceived in the spirit, to be desired by every well-wisher to the commonwealth. Despite the doctrinaire creed of the present Cabinet, there must be State-aid for the lower classes in times of distress, and a better as well as less wasteful poor-law system; and we should be glad indeed if it be possible to combine the attainment of these objects with a system of administration which would simultaneously develop the productive powers of the people, and augment the national resources of the country.

* 'English Parties and Conservatism.' By R. Dudley Baxter. An excellent, impartial, and instructive review of the history of our political parties.

COUNT CHARLES DE MONTALEMBERT.

THERE is something very sad in the dying out of a generation of the leaders and rulers of the world. Nothing marks so clearly the passage of time, the succession of one age to another, as this dropping, one by one, of the familiar names which have been sounds of authority and pre-eminence for half or quarter of a century. New necessities, new difficulties, new combinations of circumstances, have stolen upon us unawares, and we are conscious, practically, that new men have come in to guide the fortunes of nations; but nowhere are the epochs of contemporary history so clearly marked out as by graves. One cycle has ended, another has begun. The old men who linger like leaves upon the topmost branches, but emphasise the universal passing away of all with whom they have been associated. The old order changeth, giving place to new.

In such a case as that of Count de Montalembert the ending has been softened by a long preliminary chapter of retirement from the world — softened to his friends, not to himself. And yet to how many of his friends will the closing up of that chamber in the Rue du Bac, which was the abode of so much pain, yet of so much vivacious interest in the world, and animated discussion of all its affairs, be like the extinction of a friendly light in the midst of the darkness. For a great part of these years, the little simple bedroom which the author of the '*Figaro*' described the other day to his readers, with a particularity more American than French, has been an audience-chamber to which crowds have flocked. Like a dream, the writer recalls, as he writes, the half-mournful half-smiling conversation of two or three gentlemen, all of European name,

who were waiting in the large drawing-room, which formed a kind of antechamber to Montalembert's reception, one afternoon now nearly three years ago. The room was darkened because of the summer glare outside, and the animated voices came as from ghosts half seen. They were talking of Cousin, then not long dead; discussing those peculiarities which are defects in a man as long as he lives, but after his death become, as being habits of his, more dear to his friends than the highest qualities of his character. Are they talking now more sadly, yet with the smile of recollection already beginning to break up the heaviness of grief, of Montalembert? No doubt — reminding each other of his outbreaks of characteristic impatience and energy, of his sharp sayings, his keen wit, his genial kindness. But it is early yet for such softened thoughts; now and then a sob must come in, a pang of farewell, and that intolerable sense that nothing more can be said to him, nothing more heard from him, which is the soul of grief. Was it only the other day that he wrote, "let me hear often from you"? and careless life went on, and a world of petty affairs prevented the response. What matter? one would do it to-morrow or to-morrow; and now in all heaven and earth there is no way of doing it, no means of answer. There is no sadder consciousness in life.

It was in the winter of '65-'66 that Montalembert's last illness, from its beginning a very painful one, first attacked him. He was so ill in the spring of '66 as to be compelled to give up for a time the work on the completion of which he had so much set his heart, his great and favourite work, '*Les Moines d'Occident*.' Early in '67

he described himself as "in a very sad and precarious state;" and before the summer of that year his physicians had dreaded that his malady, if cured at all, must yet be a very lingering one. His strength was then so far reduced that he had to be carried to his carriage on the days he was permitted an airing; but still every day about five o'clock in the afternoon, his room was full of guests, friends of his life, who called the worn statesman and author by his Christian name, and could enter with him into full discussions of all his life-long pursuits and convictions; and, on the other hand, strangers from all quarters, whom his illness and suffering did not prevent him from receiving with all the courtly kindness and genial grace of his nature. "Your countrymen do not come to see me as much as I could wish," he wrote not three months before his death, notwithstanding the numbers who sought him continually. His interest was as fresh in everything that everybody was doing, while he lay there on his weary couch, with the close-capped sister in constant attendance upon him, as if he had still been in the full current of life. It was a relief and help to this rapid, ever-active intelligence, thus suddenly confined within four walls, and shut out from personal exertion, to participate, at least by way of sympathy, in the work and thought of others. His ear was open to everything that was suggested to him; his mind as ready and vivacious as that of any youth—nay, far more so: for youth is too much occupied with its own affairs to give such full unhesitating attention to those of others. Whatever might be the special interest of his visitor, Montalembert had always some light to throw upon it, some stray glances out of the wonderful treasures of his own knowledge or experience, or at the best, a courteous interest, an unfeigned sympathy.

The first feature in him which struck the stranger was this gracious gift of courtesy. His manners were just touched with the elaboration of the old *régime*, as became the son of an *émigré*, the inheritor of centuries of courtly French breeding. But we do not think that this impression of extreme personal benignity and politeness was, after the first encounter, the aspect of Count de Montalembert's character which made most lasting impression upon the mind of a recent acquaintance. It was rather the keenness of perception, the rapid vision, the sharp wit, never failing in absolute grace of expression, but leaving the less ready insular intelligence, with a puzzled sense of discomfiture, miles behind. He took the slow Englishman up, who was saying something probably sensible enough, and cast a gleaming coil of wit round him, and extinguished his half-said perplexed reasonings on the spot—an operation which caused a certain sensation of fright, by no means without foundation, to the bystanders. This, however, was in his days of health and unbounded activity, while yet the inherent impatience of a lively and impetuous nature survived in certain glimmers and sparkles of sarcastic vivacity, such as even perfect politeness could not quite annihilate. The enthusiasm of his character, and its intense love of beauty and appreciation of everything noble and generous, did not, we think, show so plainly in his conversation as this intellectual brilliancy and speed. Keen as daylight, sharp upon any pretence as the steel of Ithuriel's spear—instantly conscious of the presence of polite simulation, and pitiless to it—it was rather the clearness of his judgment than his poetic character which struck the observer. His was the kind of mind one could have supposed quick to sift every belief, less moved by imagination than by reason, more familiar with the processes of thought than the

visions of faith. The reader who knows him only by his works will be startled by such a view of his character. But nobody who knew Count de Montalembert will be disposed to deny a fact which adds tenfold to his weight and influence as a believer, and which makes it so much the more difficult to understand many features in his creed and many portions of his work. There could not be found any more clear-sighted observer, or shrewd and able man of the world. In things temporal and intellectual he took nothing for granted, and was the last in the world to accept a specious theory or visionary tale. To add after this, as we are inclined to do—and yet he was a fervent Roman Catholic, accepting a hundred things as absolutely true which to us seem mere fables of a fond and excited fancy—would have been to himself but another instance of “unconquerable British prejudice in respect to anything Roman;” yet it is difficult to restrain the expression of this wonder, be it prejudice or be it justice. The attitude in which at this moment he appears to us as a protestant against the last great attempt at self-assertion on the part of the Papacy, has a certain composing effect upon the general aspect of his religious character; and we have to recall to ourselves that it is the young Christian knight who in the pride of his youth gave up at a word from the Church one of the most cherished of his prospects—that it is the biographer of St Elizabeth, the historian of the monks, of whom we are speaking. Not a miracle in all those saintly lives, not a prodigy recorded in the ages of faith, disturbed his power of belief. He accepted them with the full and frank confidence of the simplest believer. He, with his keen wit and quick perceptions, his learning and sagacity, an accomplished writer and brilliant man of the

world, tingling to his finger-points with the new sap and modern vigour of his century, yet received everything which the hoary past brought to him in the name of religion with the tender faith of a child. Such a phenomenon is to be seen now and then in the world, and when it appears it is always full of attraction, full of interest—one of the finest yet strangest combinations of human character. And such was Charles de Montalembert.

It is not yet time to enter upon any full account of his life or estimate of his influence. The existence which has just ended must be a little further off before it can “orb into the perfect star” of completed being. He had lived about sixty years in the world, when he was suddenly called out of it. For thirty of these years his life was full of activity, and spent very much in the eye of the public. During this time many changes had taken place in France, and none greater than those religious changes into which he threw himself heart and soul. In the spring of '67, the writer, then in Paris, attended by his advice several conferences of the *Retraite des Hommes*, in Notre Dame, during the holy week—a most impressive and wonderful sight, such as it would be difficult to find any parallel to in this country, with all its boasted gravity. Somewhere about four thousand men, a dark mass, but faintly lighted by great flambeaux of gas placed here and there, were closely packed in the great central aisle of the Cathedral, listening with rapt attention to the preaching of Père Félix, who, though a very popular preacher, is no orator by right divine, nor capable by his own attraction only of calling so great a multitude together. The chanting by this mass of men, in plain song, of the Stabat Mater on Holy Thursday, and of the shorter hymns of the Church at the conclusion of the other services—the

great thunder of so many male voices in unison—was such a strain as we never remember to have heard before, and which no one could listen to without emotion. M. de Montalembert's face brightened when he heard the impression made by this wonderful scene upon the mind of the writer. When he began his career, he said with a certain gleam of high satisfaction in his eye, it had been considered a wonder in France to see a young man enter a church, or to hear him avow any charity towards Christianity. These were the days when Charles de Montalembert, a youth half English, or rather half Scotch, and whole enthusiast, speaking French with a taint of insular accent, and with ideas not yet wholly Continental, made acquaintance with the young Henri Lacordaire. They had met, and joined themselves together, and set their young wits to work on the grandest patriotic problem—how to lead France back to Christian faith and a religious life, cherishing all her liberties, all her privileges, the residue of good left behind by the devastating torrent of the Revolution, at the same time. What they had succeeded in doing, in one point at least, we had learned in the crowded nave of Notre Dame during those rainy chilly April evenings, and on the bright winter morn at the early communion. It was a sign of accomplished work which might well have cheered any reformer. This was one of the great objects of Montalembert's life—one which does not show largely in ordinary history: he had helped to make religion possible, helped to make it real, in his country; and if ever the history of the revival of religion in France during the last forty years should be written—and there could be no more interesting chapter of modern history—the name of Count de Montalembert would take its natural place there, side by side

with that of his friend. He poured the whole force of his young life into this highest scheme; he threw himself into plans of public instruction in every way in which it was practicable to him. His first step in public life was taken when he joined himself to Lamennais and Lacordaire in the management of their paper called '*L'Avenir*.' A year later the Christian Liberals found themselves *aux prises* with Rome, as they had already got into contact with civil law at home. The spiritual authority was more difficult to struggle with than the temporal; and it was only after a long process of deliberation and anxious thought that the two friends, Lacordaire and Montalembert, made up their minds what was their highest duty. The story is told by Montalembert himself in his life of his friend. There he describes Lacordaire as wandering and musing about the memory-haunted ruins of Rome, pondering many things which are not written there to the common eye. He understood, from all he saw around him, "not only the inviolate majesty of the supreme Pontificate, but its difficulties, its long and patient plans, its adoption of necessary expedients (*ménagements indispensables*) for the government of men and things here below." "The weakness and infirmities inseparable from the mixture of human things with divine did not escape him." In short, the devout and enthusiastic yet reasonable mind of the young French priest, recognised that perfect modes of working were not to be found in human society: that the support of the Papacy, the greatest of spiritual institutions, was far more likely to advantage a great religious work, than any wild fight for independence which he could adopt. He recognised what many men in all churches have always recognised, that something must be swallowed, something endured, in re-

turn for the great spiritual support of a universal church behind you, with all its popular traditions, and fundamental hold, however obscured now and then for a moment, upon ancient Christendom. We may accept this description written by Montalembert of his friend, as his own creed. He, too, bowed his head to the Pope's bull, when it came, forbidding the immediate work in which they were engaged. They yielded to it, both knowing that they had more important matters in hand, which forbade the possibility of schism or sectarian opposition, and thus their lives were decided in obedience to Rome; while Lamennais, in some respects a greater figure than either, mistook or declined the lesson, and giving up Rome, gave up at the same time, as happens so often, along with his faith in the Pope, his faith in Christianity.

In Germany, where the young Montalembert wandered after his unsuccessful mission to Rome, and where he again encountered Lacordaire, the materials for his beautiful *Life of St Elizabeth*, one of the finest idylls of Christian literature, were collected. It was published in the year 1836, his first work of importance. On his return to France he threw himself into political life, and lived and laboured with all the energy of his nature, taking part in all the events and all the important movements of the time. "It was the heroic age of our religious and liberal struggles," he says, in his *Life of Lacordaire*; and everything that belonged to that enlightened and conservative liberalism, which is the natural creed of all eclectic politicians, moved him with more than merely political ardour. Justice, freedom, purity, and not party names or party objects, were with him the recognised aims of legislation. His code was that all men should be free to do well, to say what good was in them, to make such efforts as they were capable of for the

advancement of the world; but yet there was in him, it must be allowed, a certain reserve as to what constituted political well-doing, and inclination to set up an arbitrary standard of his own. It was good for France to be free and united, but he did not see that the same necessity held for Italy. And there are other inconsistencies in his political creed. He was in favour of the expedition to Rome, though Poland and Ireland (which he always classed together) filled him with indignant sympathy. In short, he was no perfect man, but one full of individual partialities and prejudices, and laden with the defects as well as the virtues of his opinions. Although he speaks of the "odious injustice and unpardonable uselessness" of the Revolution of '48, his political career lasted beyond the *coup d'état*. He even made an effort to submit himself to what was inevitable as long as his own honourable, upright, straightforward spirit could do so. The spoliation of the Orleans princes was, it is said, the point which brought his patience to an end. But he continued to sit in the Chamber until 1857, when he was defeated in his own department, and retired from active political life, though not from such sharp usage of his pen as brought him, on various occasions, into contact with the authorities, and exposed him to trials and vain sentences of imprisonment, which the Emperor was wise enough never to permit to be carried out. His opinion of the present Government of France was very low, and touched with an indignant bitterness. The inevitable and fast-growing triumph of democracy was his favourite horror. With a contemptuous vehemence which no hearer could forget, he would describe the hatred of mediocrity for anything superior to itself, which was, in his opinion, the true essence of democratic sentiment. It was not only rank, or

wealth, or temporal advantage, which the mob resented, but, above all, the superiority of mind and sway of intelligence. *Epicier* France was glad to be free of *ces gens-là*—the Guizots, the Thiers, the liberal statesmen and men of talent who had been the leaders of their generation. It was a relief to the surging and heaving popular mass to throw off the sway of every one better than themselves, and to be ruled by men of nothing. Even his politeness was scarcely proof against any rash approval of absolute power; and the sentimental English fancy, or profession of a fancy, for theoretic Caesarism, irritated him to a high degree. "Why, for heaven's sake," he writes, in respect to a review of his own touching Memoir of General Lamoricière, "do you incline towards M. Carlyle's theory of autocratic government?" The mere suggestion stirred him to a sharpness keen and angry; and so did the English admiration for the Emperor, which was once more lively than now. This sentiment stung him as a poor man might be stung by commendations of poverty made by a rich and easy neighbour. "It is well for you to applaud a rule which you would not have for a single day," was his indignant comment, often repeated. Not only the actual evil, but the reproach upon France, the implication of her indifference to those liberties which he prized so much for her, wounded him to the quick. And with this feeling was mingled all the contempt, half expressed but always understood, of the old noble *filz des croisés* for a *parvenu* court. He, too, was impatient of *ces gens-là*; and still more impatient, still more contemptuous, was the high-born household which surrounded him.

Montalembert's generous, liberal, unfactionous spirit, made it at the

same time difficult for him to maintain full amity even with the Catholic party, to which he had done, one time and another, immeasurable service. It was not in him to adopt unhesitatingly a certain party, with its drawbacks and advantages. He could not bind himself, whatever the penalties might be, to the paltry and untrue. He who had made the beginning of his career extraordinary by bowing his head, in all the youthful fire of his genius, under the yoke of the Papal decree—who for the best part of his life was incessantly occupied in serving the interests of his Church, and by all the force of his talent and influence aiding her progress—became such a mark for the arrows of the Ultramontane party as no profane person could have been. "There is amongst the English Catholics," he writes in April 1866, "as well as amongst the French, a party of violent, denouncing, and persecuting people, who are unfortunately in possession of almost all our periodical press. They look upon me as more than half a heretic (as may be seen in M. Veuillot's last production, '*L'Illusion Libérale*'), on account of my liberal and conciliating opinions; and if my views, moderate as they are, were to be attenuated in the English text,* all those who are now barking against Dr Newman (on account of his strictures on certain forms of worship of the B. Virgin), and many others, would cover me with needless obloquy." It is unnecessary for us to add any description of the fulness and fervour of his faith. He considered himself tolerant to the last degree—and was so in all practical ways, there can be no doubt; but yet his friends who were heretics could not but recognise in his tone

* This was in reference to the English translation of M. de Montalembert's great work, '*Les Moines d'Occident*,' which he was most anxious should be rendered with absolute fidelity—a point on which he was fully satisfied.

[illegible][illegible]

= calm—that the Church of Rome
 _ no more than our own, a blank of
 - _ voted unanimity ; but contains
 _ her ample bosom many shades of
 _ timent, and is full of faithful
 _ ls, strong in all the fundamental
 _ ds of Christianity, who accept
 _ superfluities of Romish faith
 _ n without the slightest hesita-
 _ , and even with fervour, as
 _ ters rendered sacred by educa-
 _ and the prepossessions of na-
 _ , but without ever placing the
 _ ndary on the same level with
 _ primary objects of faith. It is
 _ within our present purpose to
 _ ire how far this was the case
 _ Montalembert. He was the
 _ st of Romanists, receiving with-
 _ doubt or difficulty much which
 _ ould seem to us impossible for
 _ a man to receive ; but he
 _ r surrendered his intelligence
 _ matters which he considered
 _ in the scope of human reason.
 _ it is strange and sad to find
 _ after his many struggles, dy-
 _ t last while in the very act of
 _ ering a stroke of the conse-
 _ lance, with which for forty
 _ he has tilted against her ene-
 _ at the pretensions of Rome.
 _ not of his Rome—the great
 _ ionary See which through a
 _ red storms had kept the life-
 _ warm in the inmost heart of
 _ tendom, and prolonged its
 _ over all these centuries by
 _ r means surely than by mere
 _ ssertion, and shutting out of
 _ al light. That wider, more
 _ sal Church of his fathers,
 _ a foolish Pope and narrow
 _ chy may encumber with still
 _ unnecessary dogmas, but
 _ a no man nor set of men can
 _ ther deprive of the ever-re-
 _ g power of Christianity, will
 _ o justice to the stainless
 _ ry of Charles de Montalembert.

his great literary work upon
 he had set his heart had
 long interrupted, and it is
 ome time since he recognised

as hopeless the possibility of bring-
 ing it near a conclusion. "I leave its
 completion to younger and happier
 hands," he wrote but a few months
 ago, with a sadness that every his-
 torical student will understand.
 Even the sober age at which he
 undertook, and the conscientious
 and laborious care with which he
 carried on, his history of '*Les*
Moines d'Occident,' have not suf-
 ficed to withdraw a certain tender
 light of sacred romance and en-
 thusiasm from that work. For
 with all his keen wit and practical
 knowledge of men, with all his
 experience of the craft of politics
 both secular and ecclesiastical, and
 insight into the meaner minds
 and less elevated thoughts which
 fill up the general mass of human-
 ity, this last *fil des croisés* vindicated
 his descent with a distinctness sel-
 dom seen in the most rigid gene-
 alogy. He was a man of the nine-
 teenth century, a constitutionalist,
 a parliamentarian, full of modern
 ways and thoughts ; and yet he
 was as true a crusader as ever took
 the cross. That cross upon his
 shield, however, is not more sig-
 nificant of the noble enthusiasm
 of his character than is the motto
 which doubtless some other clear-
 sighted, sharp-witted Montalembert,
 pursuing a visionary object
 with keenest practical good sense,
 and brave indifference to its per-
 sonal result, handed down out of the
 silent ages. "*Ni espoir, ni peur*,"
 says the proud legend. It is the
 fullest comment upon the just con-
 cluded life. For himself he has
 sought nothing, looked for nothing,
 desired nothing. But for God, and
 for the Church, and for his coun-
 try, how great have been his
 hopes, and how manifold his ef-
 forts ! How sadly, with an echo
 from that perennial disappoint-
 ment which is the burden of all
 human melodies, may we write the
 same words upon his grave ! A
 certain still despair lay at the bot-
 tom of his heart in the declining of

his life—France and the world seemed to him trembling within the vortex of overwhelming fate—God was still holding the great balance, so that somehow at the last, if even as by fire, salvation must be certain; but his hope had grown feeble of any temporal deliverance, or re-establishment of a noble social order. It is said that the recent changes in France brightened a little to his dying eyes the prospects of his nation; but this faint clearing of the skies at home could have done little to counterbalance the gloom of the storm-clouds which

were gathering over the still dearer sanctuary of his heart and wishes at Rome. Death has brought him rest from many sufferings—it is the one incident in a good man's life which we feel sure must be accompanied by fullest satisfaction and perfect content; but there is nothing sadder to the age than thus to mark its onward way by signs of the extinction of another and another light. France and the world are so much the poorer by all the brightness of one brilliant intelligence, and all the sympathy and warmth of one most genial heart.

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BLACKWOOD'S

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No. DCLV.

MAY 1870.

VOL. CVII.

CONTENTS.

OUR POOR RELATIONS,	531
TRADE-UNIONS,	554
EARL'S DENE.—PART VII.,	569
CORNELIUS O'DOWD—	591
ON SANDING THE SUGAR.	
THE MESSAGE OF PEACE.	
THE TWO SAFE CAREERS.	
OUR DIPLOMATIC SERVICE.	
THE DIFFICULT PRECEPT.	
PERSONAL AND PECULIAR.	
JOHN.—PART VII.,	609
NEW BOOKS,	628
THE EDUCATION DIFFICULTY,	652

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OUR POOR RELATIONS.

CAN any one fancy what this world would be like if inhabited by no other animal but man?—the earth without its four-footed and its creeping things, the sea and the river vacant of their shy silvery gleams and far-darting shadows, the air void of the choral hum of insects and the song of birds? What a dismal hush in creation! what a multitudinous charm and delight wanting to the woods, the fields, the shallows, and the deeps! What glory lost to the grass with the spotted ladybirds, the mail-clad beetles, and the slender grasshoppers! What splendour gone from the flower with the bronzed and fire-tipt bee that fed on its heart, and the painted butterfly that hovered above its petals! How dull had been Eden for Adam with nothing breathing but Eve, and all the rest of creation inanimate—no voice but that of the wind or the thunder—no motion but the flow of the stream, the floating of the clouds, the waving of the trees! The earth would have been silent as a picture; the forest and the plain, the mountain and the lake, forlorn, tremendous, insupportable solitudes—solitudes that none

would have sought, since there could have been neither hunters nor fishers, herdsmen nor shepherds.

In far other measure has the gift of life been poured forth upon the earth. All the generations of all the tribes of men are but a handful to the myriads of creatures which to-day, to-morrow, and every day, haunt land, air, and water, till inanimate nature teems with the sentient vitality that lends it all its interest and all its significance. A leaf holds a family, a clod a community, and there is material for the speculations of a lifetime in the tenants of the neighbouring meadow, and of the brook that waters it. The unclouded heavens would be oppressive in their vastness and loneliness but for those frequent travellers high in air, the rook, the raven, or rarer heron, that flap their untiring way onwards till they melt again into the blue depths out of which they grew upon the sight. The bare white cliffs are no longer barren when their clangorous population of chough and kittiwake and daw are abroad in the sunshine; and the black storm-cloud, coming up on the blast behind its

veil of rain, gains a beauty which before it had not, as it throws into relief the white wing of the seagull. Nay, in some countries where calm and sunshine are more permanent conditions of the atmosphere than here, we learn that the regions of air are not only a highway, but a home. Sir Samuel Baker observes that when an animal is slain in the Nubian wilderness, within a few seconds a succession of birds, hitherto invisible, descend on the prey, and always in the same order. First the black-and-white crow arrives, then the buzzard, then the small vulture, then the large vulture, lastly the marabout stork. "I believe," says Sir Samuel, "that every species keeps to its own particular elevation, and that the atmosphere contains regular strata of birds of prey, who, invisible to the human eye at their enormous height, are constantly resting upon their widespread wings and soaring in circles, watching with telescopic sight the world beneath." It is like a tale born of Persian or Arabian fantasy to hear that above the traveller in the desert hangs a huge mansion, "impalpable to feeling as to sight," with its basement, its first and second floors, its attics, and its turrets; or (to vary the image) that the social system of the atmosphere comprises its lower orders, its middle classes, and its upper ten thousand.

It is a pleasant, if somewhat extravagant, fancy, to figure to one's self man dwelling amid his fellow-tenants of the earth in completest harmony, the friend and companion of some, the protector of others, the harmer of none, the intelligent observer of all. Who shall say what new unforeseen relations might not have been established between us and our humble friends on this basis of confidence and affection? Who shall say that they might not have revealed to us that secret which they have guarded since the creation—the secret of

their instincts and their ways; what their notions are of the world, of each other, and of man; and how far they look before and after? It was one of Hawthorne's prettiest wild fancies, that Donatello, the descendant of the old Fauns, and the partial inheritor of their sylvan nature, still held kinship with the untamed creatures of the woods, and could draw them into communion with him by the peculiar charm of his voice. Every one who has domesticated some strange shy creature can testify to the wealth of character which it came to display in the ripening warmth of intimacy; and several naturalists (by which term we are far from intending to signify the dissectors of frogs, the scientific experimenters on the nerves and muscles of dogs, or the impalers of beetles and butterflies) have recorded their pleasant experiences of these connections. Thus one of them, in spite of ancient prejudice and proverbial adjectives, has elicited fine social qualities in a bear; another has owned a beaver of such intelligence that it might almost have been persuaded to become a Christian; while Mrs Southey, whose taste in this particular we respect rather than like, kept a toad (a practice which we had thought to be peculiar to old ladies who are in league with the devil), and grew so fond of the unpromising associate as to celebrate its virtues in verse. What diversity and distinctness of character in the poet Cowper's three hares! Could any amount of hare-soup, *civet de lièvre*, jugged hare, or roast hare, that ever figured at a century of city feasts, have made amends to the world for the want of the affectionate record of their social qualities? Yet many a Puss, Tiney, and Bess, as full of whim and play and individuality as they, perishes unappreciated in every day of cover-shooting, or is run into, in the open, by heartless and indiscriminating beagles. Especially in their early youth are the four-footed

peoples lovely and of good report—not to mention such obvious examples as the soft graces of kittens, the pretty stiff friskings of lambs, like toys in motion (all the lamb family are as full of quaint fun as Charles himself), and the clumsy geniality of puppies, the rule will be found elsewhere of pretty general application. Young pigs are delightful—their gambols, and squeaky grunts, and pokings in the straw, and relations with their mother and brethren, are marked with a grave facetiousness all their own, though the spectator who would enjoy them must be careful to ignore the sensual aldermanic life of the mature porker. Young donkeys, on the other hand, are by so much the more charming, as being invested with the pathos (quite awanting to the pigling) of the future hard existence that is pretty certain to await each member of the race as a poor man's drudge. Foxes, in private life, and apart from their public merits as main supporters of a great national institution, are full of estimable qualities, as many a poacher who, watching for other game, has noted Mrs Reynard unbending in the moonlight with her young family, might testify; and a little fox, with his face full of a grave sweet intelligence which is as yet undebased by the look of worldly astuteness conspicuous in after-life, is one of the prettiest sights in the world. Domesticated, they develop, in addition to their native sagacity, a most affectionate attachment to those who are kind to them; and though, owing to personal peculiarities, their society is most agreeable when the visitor approaches them from windward, yet acquaintance with a fox will always repay cultivation. Going further afield for examples of unobtrusive merit, what a wealth of humour is comprised in the phrase, "A wilderness of monkeys"! What endless fun, what fresh comedy, what brilliant farce, what infinity of by-

play and private jesting, quite beyond the reach of our most popular comedians, is being for ever enacted in those leafy theatres where they hold their untiring revels! How little are they dependent on the stimulus of a sympathetic audience, how free from the vulgarity of playing at the gallery, how careless about splitting the ears of the groundlings, how careful always to hold the mirror up to nature and to man! Hamlet could have given them no advice that would have been of service. On the contrary, they would have been spoiled by being "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought"—a metaphysical monkey, mooning over his barren philosophy, would sit in dismal discord with the surrounding fun. Even in captivity the merry race cultivate the drama, and the audiences about the great cages in the Jardin des Plantes or our own Zoological are never disappointed in the performance. It was on a Sunday last summer, that we witnessed, in the monkey-house in the Regent's Park, a piece, the serious cast of which was, on Shakespearean principles, relieved by passages of lighter matter. Perched on their poles engaged in mutual friendly investigation, or swinging airily on ropes, the community was unusually quiet, while a female monkey, not the least of whose attractions was a roseate flush which spread itself over part of her else russet-gray person, was engaged in deep flirtation with a cavalier whose nether-monkey was of a tender green shading into gold. The impassioned Romeo, chattering voluble protestations, followed the coy but loquacious Juliet, while that *lasciva puella* pelted him in retiring with orange-peel, nutshells, and straws, till they arrived beneath a branch along which lay extended another monkey, who watched the pair attentively. He may have been a rival, like the County Paris, or a dissatisfied relative, like Tybalt, or possibly he may have resented

as an injury and a slight any preference of other attractions to his own, for he presented to the curious eye some embellishments of brilliant azure. Be that as it may, without the slightest warning he dropped like a plummet on the enamoured pair, and, seizing Romeo, bit him in his gorgeous hinder parts. The injured swain, turning with an appalling grin, grappled his assailant. Juliet fled shrieking, and her outcries, mingling with the noise of combat, conveyed the tidings of the strife to all the cage, and "spread the truth from pole to pole." Thereupon all the other monkeys, leaving their own private concerns, vaulted from rope and perch towards the scene of action, where, with shrill clamour, they precipitated themselves on the combatants, and joined in a general fray;—while an elderly and morose baboon, delayed by age and infirmity, arrived rather later, and, armed with a stick, belaboured all indiscriminately who came within his reach. Shortly after, we beheld, in a neighbouring cage, a monkey, of dark attenuated figure, clinging with hands and feet, like a gigantic hairy spider, to the wire roof, apparently absorbed in meditation, while his tail hung perpendicularly down to the length of about a yard. This appendage offered irresistible attractions to a friend upon a neighbouring rope, who, after long earnestly surveying it as he swung, reached it in one wild leap, and, grasping it with both hands, proceeded to use it as the vehicle of an animated gymnastic performance. The sage above, noways discomposed, slowly turned his head, and, after a patronising glance at the pendent acrobat, resumed the thread of his meditations. Possibly this was intended as a practical illustration of the feat known to logicians as "jumping at a conclusion." But whether grave or gay, the charm of undomesticated animals is, that they show us their nature fresh from the Fashioner, unmodified by

education, or the opinion of others, or any influence which might make them wish to seem other than they are; and they follow their sports, their matings, the shaping of their abodes, their parental cares, the purveying of their food, their slumbers and flights and perambulations, their relations to their fellows, whether gregarious or solitary, with absolute independence of all impulses except those which inspired the first of their race.

The idea of a paradise of animals who move without fear round the central figure of man is not altogether fanciful, for something like it has been witnessed from time to time by lost crews, or storm-driven mariners, who reach, Crusoe-like, a haven in some hitherto unexplored province of Ocean. Birds of strange plumage come out to welcome the solitary figure in the boat, to perch on the prow, and to herald its progress; it nears the shore of the far antarctic region amid a crowd of gamesome seals, like the car of Amphitrite conducted by a procession of Tritons. On the sands sit sea-lions, gazing with their solemn eyes at man, like conscript fathers receiving a foreign envoy; penguins waddle in his path; the greater and lesser albatross come floating by, turning a bright fearless glance on him. Or, in warmer regions, dolphins are his *avant couriers*; at his approach, turtles broad of back scarce quit their eggs in the sand to crawl into the water; the gaudy parrots and creamy-crested cockatoos scream inquiry, not indignation, from the branches; the woodpecker scarce pauses in his tapping; the shining dove ceases not to woo his mate; the apes chatter a welcome, and grin not less affably than many a host and hostess who desire to give the guest a hospitable reception. We have ourselves, in the depths of Canadian forests, amid pines "hidden to the knees" in snow, seen the white hare pause to look at us as she hopped past a few yards off; the tree-grouse glance

ing downward from a branch close by with an air of courteous inquiry; and the spruce-partridges never disturbing the order in which they sat on the boughs as our snow-shoes crunched the crisp surface underneath—a confidence but ill requited, for an Indian, who guided us in those trackless woods, ascending the tree, and beginning with the bird that sat lowest, plucked off, by means of a stick and a noose, several in succession, passing the fatal loop round their necks with a skill worthy of Calcraft. Not to us does this kind of tameness seem shocking, as it did to lonely Crusoe, but rather delightful, because proof of the innocence that imagines no evil; and very touching, because it betrays the simple creature which one might think it ought to protect.

In fact, the relations between man and his co-tenants of the globe would have been altogether delightful but for one unlucky circumstance—a circumstance which, far from being inevitable or natural, is one of the insoluble problems of the earth, and has caused a terrible jar and discord in creation—namely, the fact that one animal is food for another. No doubt, as matters stand, beasts and birds of prey must follow their nature; the tearing of flesh and the picking of bones are the correlatives of fangs and grinders, beaks and talons; and the comparative anatomist is compelled to coincide with that practical Yankee, who, being told that in the days of the millennium the lion and the lamb will lie down together, said, “he expected the lamb would lie down inside the lion.” Nor is there any sign of relaxation in the vigour with which man continues to devour fish, flesh, and fowl; and no individual human stomach reaches maturity without sacrificing whole hecatombs of victims by the way. If we (the present writer) were to make any pretence to a virtuous distaste for flesh, we should justly be rebuked

by the thought of all the slayings and cookings that our presence in the world has caused, and will yet cause. All the yet unborn, unlit-tered, and unhatched creatures that will be trussed and jointed, skewered, basted, roasted, boiled, grilled, and served up, to keep our single soul and body together, might very properly low, bleat, grunt, gobble, quack, cackle, and chirp us the lie in our throat. In particular might we be haunted and humbled by the memory of our carnivorous desires on that evening when, having toiled all day on foot from Martigny up the Great St Bernard, we sat, hungry and weary, a solitary guest, with one sad monk for host, in the huge dining-hall of the Hospice. We were hungry with the hunger of those snow-clad altitudes; succulent visions of stew and cutlet floated before our fancy; and when an attendant bore into the twilight hall a tray with many dishes, we blessed the pious memory of the sainted Bernard. Our gratitude cooled a little with the soup, which seemed to be compounded of grass and warm water: the remains of some cold pudding, of a kind suitable for infants, followed; then some slices of potato fried in oil; then a ragout of the green products of the Italian ditches; till at length, in the growing darkness, a plate was placed before us on which glimmered some small brown patches which might be diminutive cutlets, or sliced kidneys, or possibly bits of baked meat. Into the nearest we plunged our fork—shade of Dalgetty, it was a stewed prune! A dried apple, we believe, concluded the repast, but we did not eat it. As to grace, Amen stuck in our throat; and we had rather not repeat the epithets which we breathed to our pillow that night in honour of the canonised founder of the feast. Nor among our gastronomic recollections should we omit the time when, on a foreign strand, where we had subsisted for some days chiefly on the cabbages of the country, and were lying, sick

and jaundiced and void of all desire for food, in our tent, we were driven by some strange perverse impulse to devise an infinite number of bills of fare, composed of the choicest viands, to be partaken by the choicest guests, whenever we should again sit in the cheerful warmth of a certain club in Pall Mall; visions since in great part realised. When, therefore, we argue that the juxtaposition of the words "animal food" expresses a disastrous condition of our existence, the candid reader will understand that we make no pretence to have discovered an alternative, or to be exempt from the common misfortune.

To a race of vegetarian men surrounded by vegetarian animals—herds from which they demanded only milk, flocks whose sole tribute was their fleece, and poultry which supplied nothing but eggs to the board—the idea of depriving creatures of life in order to eat them would probably seem monstrous and repulsive. But custom will reconcile us to anything; the Fans feast on their nearest relatives with as little disgust as we on a haunch or a sirloin; and if bills of fare prevailed among that interesting people, a *rôt* of aged grandfather, an *entrée* of curried aunt, or sucking-nephew's head *en tortue*, would be as much matters of course as our ordinary dishes. But, notwithstanding the omnivorous conformation of the human teeth, and the all-assimilative faculty of the human stomach, it is scarcely to be imagined that man, placed in a paradise of roots and fruits, herbs and grain, honey and spices, milk and wine, would have originated of himself the idea of killing and eating animals. He may have been first corrupted by the bad example of the *carnivora*. The spectacle of a tiger rending a kid, or an eagle a pigeon, may have habituated him to connect the ideas of slaughter and food; next, his imitative propensities may have kindled the desire to perform the process himself;

and, the imagination thus depraved, any remaining scruples would speedily vanish, in time of dearth, before the impulse of a craving stomach. But however the custom may have arisen, we are not left in any doubt as to the dietary habits of our primeval ancestors. The earliest trace of man on the earth is the flint weapon with which he slew the bear, the deer, and the beaver, whose bones strewed the site of his dwellings. His first garments were torn from the backs they grew on. His first business was the chase. Natural philosophers tell us that a habit, accidental at first, grows, in the course of transmission, into the nature, and becomes a characteristic. It was perhaps in this way that the germ of destructiveness, implanted by instant and ever-pressing necessity in the aboriginal breast, struck such deep root that, in all succeeding ages, every corner of the inhabited earth has been a shambles, and the rest of animated creation has been compelled to accept from man either subjection or persecution—persecution often pushed even to extermination. In the pride of that power which, through the faculty of speech, man possesses, of combining forces and transmitting knowledge, he has exercised ruthlessly his dominion over the beast of the field and the fowl of the air. Wherever he has held sway, there have all other creatures drawn their painful breath in subjection, unchampioned and unpitied. If in that imaginary paradise of animals we have already sketched, we simply introduce the figure of a NATIVE, the whole scene changes. That lean, low-browed, flat-nosed caricature of humanity, more like a painter's lay figure than a sculptor's model—full of propensities much viler than those of the animals around him—selfish, remorseless, faithless, treacherous—is monarch of all he surveys. The birds have learnt the power of the poisoned arrow—the beasts have a wholesome dread of the ambush and the snare. That bronze-colour-

ed being, distinguished from the ape chiefly by superior malevolence and articulate speech, walks surrounded by a wide circle of fear. The creatures around him have learnt, and taught their young, the lesson that he is as malignant as he is powerful. Only give him time, and he will depopulate whole regions of their animals. The gigantic Moa no longer stalks over the hills of New Zealand. The moose disappears from the east of the American continent as the buffalo from the west. South Africa, that used to teem with wild herds, crowding the wide landscape up to the horizon, and astounding the traveller with the magnificent spectacle of tribes of antelopes, zebras, and giraffes hiding the plain, elephants and rhinoceroses browsing securely amid the clumps of trees, and hippopotamuses swarming in the rivers, has, since the negroes were supplied with guns, been almost swept of its game, and in some parts not only have the birds disappeared, but the very moles and mice are growing scarce. In fact, in all lands the savage gluts himself with slaughter. Nor is his civilised brother behind him in the propensity to destroy, which nothing but the interest of proprietorship avails to check. Everywhere it is absolutely a capital crime to be an unowned creature. Darwin tells us that "when the Falkland Islands were first visited by man, the large wolf-like dog (*Canis antarcticus*) fearlessly came to meet Byron's sailors, who, mistaking their ignorant curiosity for ferocity, ran into the water to avoid them; *even recently, a man, by holding a piece of meat in one hand and a knife in the other, could sometimes stick them at night.*" Beautiful attitude of humanity! In those parts of America where game-laws do not exist the game has almost disappeared; in France the small birds have been destroyed, to the great joy and prosperity of the insects and caterpillars; in England

the interests of game-preserving have proscribed the owl, the falcon, the eagle, the weasel, and a host of other tenants of the woods. Generations ago the bustard had vanished from our downs, and within the memory of man the last pair of wheatears were shot in Sussex. The act which has of late come to be stigmatised as "bird-murder," still, in rural districts, casts a halo of glory round the perpetrator; and we frequently read how "Mr James Butcher, gamekeeper at Longears, lately shot a fine specimen of the golden eagle;" or how "our respected fellow-townsmen, Mr Noodle, killed, last Wednesday, the only hoopoe that has visited this part of the country for many years." Nightingales, so common in the south of England, have not spread so far westward as Devonshire; and an idiot once wrote to the papers to announce that he had just succeeded in killing one which had been guilty of straying within the confines of that county, "as it was singing on the top of a thorn." Sometimes, in distant seas, new tracts of coast have been discovered abounding in seals, and straight-way crews of enterprising mariners have arrived armed with spears and clubs, who have wallowed in slaughter, never ceasing to stab and strike till all that hapless and harmless life was extinct, no tenants again for ever lending cheer to those desolate shores, the grey lonely sea no more rippled by their sports. Wherever there is no law for the river or the lake, the inhabitants of the flood disappear—even the countless tribes of the ocean are being rapidly thinned by the insatiate rapacity of man.

But not for his bodily needs alone has the human animal been so lavish in destroying others. His spiritual interests have also demanded much of that kind of prodigality. A devil, under one name or another, lies at the root of many religions; and many, in their infancies, have recognised the

duty of propitiating the unseen powers by sacrifice. Deeply convinced, and with good reason, of the tremendous power of evil in human affairs; feeling in his own lot how irresistible is the force of malignant influences, how futile his efforts to evade them,—man has soon learned to associate the supernatural power which he dreads, with delight in inflicting pain; and, accustomed to slay creatures for his own wants, he next conceives the idea of slaying them for the satisfaction of his sanguinary gods. In most lands the supplications of the savage to his deity are written in blood; and his petitions, often foolish and often wicked, are thought to be more palatable if they ascend in the smoke of burnt-offerings. As civilisation advances, sacrifice grows more ceremonial—butchery becomes a priestly function; and the ancient world was filled with blood-stained altars, the mythology of its peoples with prescribed modes of reverential slaughter, and the assignment to particular deities of particular victims. It was natural that the idea of propitiation by vicarious suffering should extend till it included man himself; and had the oxen, and lambs, and kids, and birds, whose fellows bled so constantly as votive offerings, been capable of sharing the strictly human gratification of revenge, they would have found ample opportunity for exulting in the spectacle of men sacrificed by their fellows. “Moloch, horrid king,” has been worshipped, though not always under that name, in many lands, and in many ages; his grinning image has looked down on Druids with their wicker idols filled with victims, and on Aztec priest laying hearts yet beating on his altar-stone. Even in our day, his votary the Thug makes assassination the chief article of religion, and the king of Dahomey floats his consecrated canoe in human blood. There was a profound meaning,

and one applicable to the history of our race, in Hogarth’s representation of different stages in atrocity, where the hero, beginning with cruelty, ends with murder.

Nevertheless, in all his slayings and his sacrifices, man has had standing between him and reprobation the plea of the hard conditions of life, which rendered his acts natural and necessary, and therefore not degrading. Even when the chase, as in the great huntings of the Asiatic monarchs, left the plain laden with carcasses, this was still only the excess of a propensity easy to be justified. But perhaps, in course of time, the habit of looking on the whole animal world as absolutely subject to the convenience of man, and of regarding the infliction of death with indifference, developed a latent germ in our mysterious nature, whereupon a new human quality—namely, CRUELTY—sprang up and greatly flourished. No doubt it had, in the congenial soil of individual human breasts, in all times found its habitat: natures partaking so much more of the demon than the god as to find enjoyment in the contemplation of pain, must always have been but too plentiful. But in course of time this poisonous offspring of a bad heart came, in gardeners’ language, to be “bedded out” in national institutions, such as the Flavian and other amphitheatres, our own bear-baitings, bull-baitings, badger-baitings, rat-killings, and cock-fights, the arenas of Eastern princes, and the bull-rings of Spain; and whole peoples were trained in the main doctrine of devil-worship—namely, that it is delightful to inflict or to witness agony. All the aid which grandeur of architecture, pomp of ceremonial, the sanction of authority, and the keen expectation and high-strung interest which are engendered in the holiday assemblies of multitudes, could lend to develop cruelty and quench humanity, was afforded by these great spectacles. Rome transferred to the huge circus

on these occasions her statecraft, her priesthood, her beauty, her lofty patrician airs and graces, her jolly plebeian merriment; fresh garlands, new togas, gay girdles, splendid robes, and brilliant gems, made the wide sweep of the amphitheatre a circle of splendour. Into the sand-strewn space below crowded the bewildered inhabitants of the forest and the desert—the slow-stalking elephant, the giraffe with its towering form and gentle eyes, the sleek slinking tiger, the sturdy undaunted boar, the plumed ostriches hurrying hither and thither in search of an outlet. Brilliant thus far the spectacle—but interesting to “those bold Romans” only for its promise of slaughter; and their enjoyment was incomplete till the bright fur was dabbled in blood, the huge forms still in death, the feathers strewn on the sand; and then, from full and grateful hearts, they applauded the imperial purveyor of the sport, the good old monarch Tiberius, who went home to spend the evening in torturing some slaves, or the most sweet youth Domitian, who had been killing flies in his palace all the morning. And in the *Plazas de Toros* of Ronda, Seville, or Madrid, the modern spectator may realise no small portion of the magnificence of the amphitheatres of the old world, and may see, joyous and eager as ever, the spirit that delights in blood. This consecration of cruelty could not but react on the people; torture was a refined, and at the same time a cheap, pleasure. Poverty itself, debarred from such luxuries as elephants and ostriches, could at least procure cats, rats, birds, and frogs; and wherever there was a defenceless animal and a few ingenuous youth, there was a small Colosseum. It was natural that a people thus trained should demand, for the full satisfaction of their desires, the blood of gladiators and captives.

No longer sacrificing to the ancient gods, we still lay living offer-

ings on the shrine of the chief divinity in modern mythology—namely, Science. The most virtuous among us agree (not without a certain air of pious satisfaction at the supposed necessity) that it is lawful to dissect live animals for the benefit of humanity. Where the sanctioning law is to be found we know not, and it was certainly made without reference to the parties principally concerned, which seems hardly consonant with the spirit of modern legislation. It may, however, be granted that when some great discovery is the result, the wrong may be, if not justified, excused—that, when Bell succeeds in demonstrating the functions of the brain, we may agree not to inquire too closely into the number of living creatures whose nerves of motion and sensation were laid bare and pricked with needles during the investigation. Neither can we altogether condemn that discoverer when we find him preparing to procure a monkey on which to practise the operation that goes by his name (Bell’s, not the monkey’s) for the cure of squinting—though, of course, the monkey would not care though the whole human race squinted. But after excepting a few great names, we fear there are still throughout the surgical and veterinary professions numerous diligent inquirers, who, without the intellect necessary to penetrate the secrets of science, are engaged in the pursuit of delusions, or of crotchets, or of matters unimportant if true, and on such grounds do not hesitate to submit animals to the most prolonged and horrible tortures. The professional gentleman who is known to be engaged in such practices may very fairly be suspected of indulging a taste under the sanction of a duty; for it is hardly to be believed that anybody who did not enjoy vivisection for its own sake would submit his nature to what would be such violence, unless under the pressure of a very exceptionally powerful mo-

tive. The miscreants of the veterinary colleges of Lyons and Alfort, for example, who habitually performed many most terrible operations, some of them of no possible application as remedies, on the same living horse, and who warmly resented interference, must have found a horrid relish in their vile vocation. In a letter published in a journal devoted to the interests of animals, we find one of the principal surgeons of the Hotel Dieu, M. le Docteur M—— (we are sorry we cannot give his honourable name) reported as saying that studies and experiments are always made on living animals; and that there is a class of men who live by catching stray dogs and selling them to be operated on, five or six operations being often performed on the same animal. "Sometimes," said the doctor, "I have taken pity upon the poor brutes; they showed so much intelligence, and seemed to think I was operating upon them to do them good. In such cases I have occasionally kept them, *but usually I turn them into the street.*" Is it uncharitable to hope that the next dog operated on may be rabid, and may bite this scientific inquirer? There is a well-known piteous case, too, of an English vivisector who operated on his own dog while it licked the hand that continued to dissect it.

But there is yet another class of these votaries of science, called Naturalists, to whom no kind of creature that can be classified comes amiss as a victim, from a butterfly to a hippopotamus. Armed sometimes with a rifle, sometimes less expensively with a pin, they go forth into strange lands to collect what they call the "fauna." Millions of moths, before they have fluttered out half their brief existence in the sunshine, are secured by these sportsmen, and impaled in boxes. Lizards and other reptiles suspected of differing from the rest of their race, are put to death without mercy. The rarity

of various birds, and the splendour of their plumage, are held to be sufficient grounds for their execution. So earnest in their pursuit are these gentlemen, that we have sometimes, when reading their own account of their doings, suspected that they would have scrupled little to add a stray Native now and then to their collection, provided they did not thereby expose themselves to the penalties of murder. We will here give some extracts from the recent work of a naturalist, which is in many respects agreeable and entertaining, premising that the "Mias" who figures in them is a gigantic ape (the orang-outang, we believe), a native of Borneo, living for the most part inoffensively on the products of the woods; and that only a single case is quoted in the book of any of the race having injured mankind, in which one that was intercepted in its retreat to a tree, and stabbed with spears and hacked with axes, resented these playful aggressions so far as to bite one of its assailants in the arm. This is the account of the result of a great many shots fired by the naturalist at a Mias who was making off through the branches of the tall trees:—"On examination we found he had been dreadfully wounded. Both legs were broken, one hip-joint and the root of the spine completely shattered, and two bullets were found flattened in his neck and jaws! Yet he was still alive when he fell."

Another of these subjects of scientific investigation was thus treated:—

"Two shots caused this animal to loose his hold, but he hung for a considerable time by one hand, and then fell flat on his face, and was half buried in the swamp. For several minutes he lay groaning and panting, and we stood close round, expecting every breath to be his last. Suddenly, however, by a violent effort, he raised himself up, causing us all to step back a yard or two, when, standing nearly erect, he caught hold of a small tree, and began to ascend it. Another shot through the

back caused him to fall down dead. A flattened bullet was found in his tongue, having entered the lower part of the abdomen, and completely traversed the body, fracturing the first cervical vertebra. Yet it was after this fearful wound that he had risen and begun climbing with considerable facility."

This was the fate of another of these unfortunates :—

"We found a Mias feeding in a very lofty darian tree, and succeeded in killing it after eight shots. Unfortunately it remained in the tree, hanging by its hands; and we were obliged to leave it and return home, as it was several miles off. As I felt pretty sure it would fall during the night, I returned to the place early the next morning, and found it on the ground beneath the tree. To my astonishment and pleasure, it appeared to be a different kind from any I had yet seen."

Perhaps the reader whose sensibilities are as yet unaffected by science, may think that these are very shocking penalties for the crime of being a Mias, and of possessing an anatomical structure much coveted by museums; and may feel disposed (parodying Madame Roland) to exclaim, "O Science, what deeds are done in thy name!"

In those days (says an Oriental fabulist in the least known of his apologues which we have taken the trouble to translate from the original Arabic), when certain sages were acquainted with the language of animals (an accomplishment which they inherited from Solomon, who is well known to have added this to his other stores of wisdom), it naturally came to pass that, not only did men know something of the thoughts of birds and beasts, but to birds and beasts were imparted some of the ideas of men, and, among others, that of a devil or malignant power who is the source of evil. Much impressed with the reality of the ills of life, and the expediency of lessening them, the fowls and brutes resolved to seek some means of propitiating the being who exercised over them

so baleful an influence. Accordingly they held a convocation to debate the matter, and it being necessary, as a first step, to gain a more definite idea of the nature and attributes of this malevolent power, different classes of animals were called on to describe the ills they chiefly suffered from, that their misfortunes might thus be traced to a common source. The Lion, as the representative of beasts of prey, declared that he would have nothing to complain of, game being plentiful, were it not for the accursed hunters with their devices, which left him no peace. The Antelope said that the class of wild creatures to which he belonged would be content to match their own vigilance and swiftness against the craft and strength of their four-footed persecutors, but that they could not contend with the terrible ingenuity of man, who, in his pursuit of them, had even called other animals to his aid; and that, whereas a beast of prey molested them only for the satisfaction of his individual needs, man was insatiate in slaughter. The Birds were of one consent that they feared little the hostility of animals, but that snares and traps rendered their lives a burden by causing them to distrust every mouthful they ate. The Sheep, as the mouthpiece of a large class of domestic animals, declared that he was well cared for, fed, and protected from harm, but that he paid a heavy price for these favours by living in constant expectation of the inevitable and extremely premature moment when he would become mutton. The Horse averred that he also was well cared for, and that, moreover, his life, unlike the sheep's, was insured so long as he had health and strength, but (motioning with his muzzle towards the saddle-marks on his back and the spur-galls on his flanks) that his life was deprived of savour by being one of perpetual slavery. The Dog said that his lot might perhaps seem the happiest of all, in being the companion of his

master, but that in reality he had more to lament than any of them, since protection was only granted to him on condition that he should aid in the destruction of his fellow-brutes. A great mass of information having been accumulated in this way, the assembly seemed still as far as ever from discovering the object of its inquiry, when an ancient Raven, of vast repute for wisdom, hopping to a loftier branch, desired to speak. "My friends," he croaked, "what we are seeking lies under our very noses. I perceive what this power of evil is, and how futile will be all attempts to propitiate it, for it is clear that Man, insatiate Man, is our Devil!"

Yet, in truth, is Nature often no less harsh than man in dealing with her inarticulate offspring. To them (as indeed to us) she shows fitful favour, capricious severity. In one zone animal life seems all happiness, in another all misery. It is a pleasure to a care-laden, tax-hampered citizen merely to think how, under certain conditions of adaptation to climate, whole tribes of creatures, countless in number, revel in the opulence and prodigality of food, of air, of sunshine, and of sport;—the task of supporting life is so easy as to leave them infinite leisure for enjoying it;—they are as Sandwich Islanders, into whose simple untaught methods of making existence pleasure no missionary can ever introduce the jarring element of a half-awakened conscience. As Shelley heard in the notes of the skylark "clear, keen joyance," "love of its own kind," and "ignorance of pain," and exhausted himself in sweet similitudes for the small musician that "panted forth a flood of rapture so divine"—so, had we his gift, we might discern elements as rare in the lives of various races, but which, owing to the accident of wanting a grammatical language, they are unable to reveal to us. What a descriptive poem must the Eagle have in him, who, sailing in ether, miles beyond our

ken, sees earth beneath him as a map, and through gaps in the clouds catches blue glimpses of the ocean and yellow gleams of the desert! Often, while resting on his great pennons in the serene blue, has he seen a thunderstorm unroll its pageant beneath him, and watched the jagged lightning as it darted earthward. (Tom Campbell was once taken up by an eagle near Oran, and, coming safely down, described what he had seen in immortal verse). Those hermit birds which live by lonely streams in wild valleys, like the ouzel and the kingfisher, must be full of delicate fancies—fancies very different from those, which must be very delicate also, that visit the nomads of the air, such as the swallow, the cuckoo, and the quail, with their large experience of countries and climes and seas. How delicious, how ever fresh, how close to nature, the life of a sea-fowl whose home is in some cliff fronting the dawn, and who, dwelling always there, yet sees infinite variety in the ever-changing sky and sea—flapping leisurely over the gentle ripples in the morning breeze—alighting in the depths which mirror the evening sky so placidly as to break into circles round the dip of his wing—piercing, like a ray, the silver haze of the rain-cloud—lost in the dusky bosom of the squall—blown about like a leaf on the storm which strews the shore with wrecks—and, next day, rising and falling in the sunshine on the curves of the swell! Turning from air to earth, the very spirit of Tell—the spirit of independence bred of the pure sharp air of mountain solitudes and the stern aspect of the snow-clad pinnacles—must live in the Chamois who seeks his food and pastime on the verge of immeasurable precipices. Grand also, but infinitely different, the solitary empire of some shaggy lord of the wilderness, on whose ease none may intrude, and who stalks through life surrounded by images of flight and terror—glowing al-

ways with the gloomy rage of the despot—a despot careless of hereditary right, elected by nobody's suffrage, relying on no strength but his own, and absolutely indifferent to public opinion. Below these lofty regions of animal grandeur, but quite within the circle of comfort and happiness, dwell an infinite number of creatures, some finding their felicity in flocks or herds, some in retiring into strict domestic seclusion with the mate of their choice, some in exercising the constructive faculties with which they are so mysteriously and unerringly endowed. The conies are but a feeble folk, yet they may have their own ideas of household suffrage in those close burrows of theirs, and could doubtless chronicle much that would be valuable to parents while bringing up about fifteen families a-year. Rats and mice and such small deer lead lives of great variety, observation, and adventure, though precarious and mostly tragical in their ending; the poison and the steel being as fatal to them as to the enemies of the Borgias, or claimants to disputed successions in the middle ages. And, again, beneath these, too insignificant to excite the hostility or cupidity of man, dwell an infinite number of creatures, creeping and winged things, whose spacious home is the broad sunshine; so that, viewed from a favourable standpoint, every nook and corner of the world, its cellars, garrets, lumber-rooms, and all, seem to overflow with busy delight or quiet happiness.

But who would recognise in this kind and liberal mother, so lavish of pleasures to her offspring, the stern power that makes the lives of whole races sheer misery? Can any one fancy what it must be to have habitual dread forming an element of life, and transmitted through countless generations till it finds expression in habits of vigilance, of stealth, and of evasion, that we take for peculiar instincts?

This power of communicating the results of experience, and of circulating throughout a whole species the fear of a known evil, is one of the most inexplicable faculties of unreasoning and inarticulate creatures. A naturalist, well qualified to form an opinion, believes, we are told, that the life of all beasts in their wild state is an exceedingly anxious one; that "every antelope in South Africa has literally to run for its life once in every one or two days upon an average, and that he starts or gallops under the influence of a false alarm many times in a day." Our own fields and woods are full of proscribed creatures which must feel as if they had no business in creation, and only draw their breath by stealth, vanishing in earth, or air, or water, at the shadow of an imagined enemy. In those lands of the sun where vegetation is most luxuriant, and food consequently most assured, there is yet a kind of privation as terrible as hunger. "At Koobe," says Livingstone, describing his experiences in Africa, "there was such a mass of mud in the pond, worked up by the wallowing rhinoceros to the consistency of mortar, that only by great labour could we get a space cleared at one side for the water to ooze through and collect in for the oxen. Should the rhinoceros come back, a single roll in the great mass we had thrown on one side would have rendered all our labour vain. It was therefore necessary for us to guard the spot by night. On these great flats, all around, we saw in the white sultry glare herds of zebras, gnus, and occasionally buffaloes, standing for days, looking wistfully towards the wells for a share of the nasty water." And in other parts of the African continent, when the fierceness of the summer has dried up the rivers, the amphibia, great and small, collect in uncongenial crowds in the pools left along the deeper parts of the channel; and the land animals, the deer, the

apes, the birds, stoop hastily and furtively to snatch insufficient draughts from the depths where lurk so many ravenous foes. Then, in colder lands, what wretchedness does winter bring—when the snow puts an end to the livelihood of all the tribes which seek sustenance on the earth, and the frost mocks the misery of those whose food is in the marsh or the pool! The frozen-out woodcock taps in vain for a soft spot in which to insert his slender bill—his larder is locked up and the key gone. In one long frost all the snipe perished in parts of Scotland, and have never been plentiful since. Now and then comes a winter so sharp that the naturalist misses, next summer, whole species from their accustomed haunts. A rural poet, Hurdis, who caught no inconsiderable portion of Cowper's inspiration, has the following passage on the condition of birds in winter, which took such effect on our boyhood as to save many a blackbird and starling from our "resounding tube," and which, on reading it again after the not brief interval now separating us from that golden time, still seems to us much more genuine poetry than many elegant extracts of far higher pretension:—

"Subdued by hunger, the poor feathery tribes,
Small dread of man retain, though wounded oft,
Oft slain, or scared by his resounding tube.
The fieldfare gray, and he of ruddier wing,
Hop o'er the field unheeding, easy prey
To him whose heart has adamant enough
To level thunder at their humbled race.
The sable bird melodious from the bough
No longer springs, alert and clamorous,
Short flight and sudden with transparent wing
Along the dyke performing, fit by fit.
Shuddering he sits, in horrent coat out-sworn.
Despair has made him silent, and he falls
From his loved hawthorn of its berry spoiled,
A wasted skeleton, shot through and through
By the near-aiming sportsman. Lovely bird,
So end thy sorrows, and so ends thy song;
Never again in the still summer's eve,

Or early dawn of purple-vested morn,
Shalt thou be heard, or solitary song
Whistle contented from the watery bough,
What time the sun flings o'er the dewy earth

An unexpected beam, fringing with flame
The cloud immense, whose shower-shedding folds

Have all day dwelt upon a deluged world:
No, thy sweet pipe is mute, it sings no more."

The picture which follows, and which less obviously aims at exciting sympathy, is none the less effective for that:—

"High on the topmost branches of the elm,
In sable conversation sits the flock
Of social starlings, the withdrawing beam
Enjoying, *supperless*, of hasty day."

How mournful for these poor starvelings the fact, apparently so insignificant, that the temperature has fallen below freezing-point! What misery is approaching them in the leaden gloom of the north-east! And in those circles of the earth where the reign of winter is prolonged, hunger is the inseparable associate of life, lying down with it in its shivering sleep, rising with it in its gloomy waking, and tracking its footsteps always along the ice-bound circuit of its weary quest.

But if the vicissitudes of climate are fraught with suffering, so are the vicissitudes of age. The infancy of many animals is as helpless as babyhood. Few hired nurses, it is true, are so patient, so provident, so watchful, so untiring in care, as the dams, feathered or furred, who, in nest or lair, watch over their young. But then the lives of these guardians are terribly precarious, and innumerable are the orphans of the animal world. The boy with his snare or his stone—the gamekeeper with gin, or net, or gun—the watchful enemies who swoop from the air or spring from the ambush—are very apt to make the nurslings motherless. In how many an eyrie have sat gaping eaglets expectant of the broad food-bringing wings that will never more overshadow them—the said wings being then

indeed outstretched on a barn-door, nailed there by that intelligent high-priest of nature, the keeper! In how many burrows starve, before ever seeing the light, litters of young whose providers lie dead in the wood, or hang from a nail in the larder! In how many nests of sticks, swaying on the pine-tops, scream the unfeathered rooks, while the old bird is suspended as a scare-crow from a stick in the distant corn-field! Every wet spring drowns in the holes they have never learnt to quit a multitude of small helpless creatures—every storm of early summer casts innumerable half-fledged birds prematurely on the hard world to cower and scramble and palpitate and hunger, till inevitable doom overtakes them after a more or less short interval. This perilous season of infancy past, however, the youth of animals is, compared with that of man, secure and brief, and their maturity is generally free from morbid or disabling accidents. But then comes the time of old age and decay—old age such as man's would be if wanting all which Macbeth truly says should accompany it, in order to render its many infirmities tolerable—"honour, love, obedience, troops of friends." As the activity necessary to procure food diminishes, and the joints stiffen, and the flesh recedes, leaving to the bones the task of sustaining the wrinkling skin, the sunshine grows less warm, the wind more bitter; and if the worn-out creature is neither made prey of by its enemies, nor put to death (as is the instinct of many races) by its friends, it withdraws to some secret spot to die in solitude. In this unprofitable stage of existence, the protection of man is accorded to domesticated animals on principles strictly commercial. Those which are expected to pay the expenses of their keep, are pretty certain to find an execution put in by their inexorable creditors as soon as they become bankrupt of their services, and

those only are suffered to live whose existence is matter of luxury. The old bullfinch is allowed to drop off his perch in the course of nature, and to pipe his own requiem—the old parrot dozes quietly away after forgetting half his phrases, and mixing up the rest in a confusion which may, perhaps, be his way of "babbling of green fields"—the old lapdog is recovered by medical aid out of many apoplexies before submitting to the final stroke—the old spaniel lives on to meditate on the happy hunting-grounds of the past, and perhaps to dream of those of the future; but for the old horse (unless his master be rich as well as kind) there is no interval of rest in old age, wherein to prepare for those other pastures whither he may be hastening, or to reflect on the busy portion of his well-spent or ill-spent life. Necessity generally compels the owner to make an end of a life that will not repay its maintenance. The veteran, "lingering superfluous on the stage," asks for bran and gets a bullet; it is only his corn that he wants bruised when the knacker arrives with the pole-axe.

Perhaps no case of royalty in reduced circumstances is so sad as that of the lion in his latter days. Frequent as are, in our times, the vicissitudes of monarchs, neither the deposed Queen of Spain at Bayonne, nor the exploded Bomba in Rome, nor, to look further back, Louis Philippe appearing suddenly in this country as Mr Smith, with a carpet-bag and cotton umbrella, is so melancholy a figure of fallen greatness as the King of the Solitudes in his old age. The first stage of his decline is marked by the inability any longer to spring on the nimble antelope, or to cope with the sturdy buffalo; and, against his better nature, the leonine Lear, still grand and imposing of aspect, but bereft of his power, is driven to watch for stray children going to the well, or old women picking sticks in the forest. It might be

imagined that the sable philosophers of the bereaved tribe would regard this abduction of aged females as praiseworthy, or would at least consider the eating of them as a sufficient punishment for the offence. Not so, however; a lion once known as a man, woman, or child eater, is by no means encouraged, even in Africa, in the indulgence of his tastes; and what with constant interruptions, and the necessity for increased vigilance against his foes, he seldom enjoys a meal in peace. As his teeth fail and his joints stiffen, he is no longer able to capture the feeblest crone or to masticate the tenderest virgin; and in the "last stage of all, that ends this strange eventful history," he (as we learn from competent authority) catches mice for a subsistence, gulping them like pills, and ekes out the insufficient diet with grass. Imagine this incarnation of absolute power, this rioter in the blood of swift and powerful beasts, this emitter of the roar that causes all the hearts in the wilderness to quake, driven, in what should be a majestic old age, to pick his own salads and to turn mouser! The number of times that, with his large frame and corresponding appetite, he must perform for each scanty meal the degrading act of watching for and pouncing on a mouse, must ultimately deprave his whole character; daily he must sink lower in his own esteem; reformation and suicide are equally denied him; till, happily, the savage who comes upon his track, knowing by signs that he has been forced to graze, knows also that his feebleness is great; and finding him not far off, stretched out beneath a bush, in the sleep of exhaustion or the torpor of self-contempt, considerably hastens with his assagai to draw a veil over the painful scene.

Were we to stop here, our disquisition would be little other than a Jeremiad—an empty lament for misfortunes without prospect of

remedy—a crying over spilt milk, which would be equally foreign to our natural character and our acquired philosophy. But evil as has been the hap of the animal world, there are visible signs of hope for it. Its relations with us are manifestly and rapidly improving, and this is owing to a manifest and rapid improvement in ourselves. Whether, amid all our boasts of the progress of the species, man has really succeeded in redressing the balance of good and evil in his nature, may be matter of unpleasant doubt. Sometimes, when a very reprehensible or lamentable failing of some vanished generation is set very pressingly before us—some horrid persecution, political or religious—some triumph of unreason—some huge injustice practised by a despot on a people, or by a people on themselves,—we being at the time, perhaps, in especial good humour with the world around us, in which those particular evils are not possible, take heart, and would fain believe that humanity is getting on. But presently, when we notice how our contemporaries form what they imagine to be their convictions, what sort of idols they worship, what kind of progress it is which is least disputable, and of which they are most proud, we lose courage again, and feel as if man were doomed for ever to revolve in the vicious circle of some maelstrom, some system inside of which all is delusion, while outside of it all is doubt. Surveying mankind with extensive view from the prehistoric ages to Parliamentary committees on education, we fancy that we see much of our gain balanced by corresponding loss, and that we have made room for many of our most valued characteristics only by discarding qualities which have rendered whole races for ever famous. As we grow more practical, we decry magnanimity—ceasing to be superstitious, we forget to be earnest—vigour, born of enterprise, is smothered in luxury

—and the cuckoo science ousts the sparrow faith. But all the time, various as are the aspects of various ages, the elements of humanity remain unaltered, however disguised by their changing vesture; even as while the landscape varies, in one period a wood, or swamp, or heath, in the next a farm or a city, the central fires are still glowing beneath, and still betray their presence at times in an earthquake or a volcano. Scrape a man of science, or a man of progress, or a man of fashion, and you still get a savage. But nevertheless, in striking the balance between old and new, there is an item that must stand to our credit absolutely, without deduction. Our relations with the races which share the earth with us are so changed, and the change is still so progressive, that a new element would almost appear to have been developed in our nature. All the authors not only of antiquity, but of modern times, down to a few generations ago, may be searched without the discovery of a dozen passages indicative of that fellowship with our co-tenants of the globe which is now so common a feeling. That the good man is merciful to his beast—that the ewe lamb of the parable drank of its owner's cup and lay in his bosom—that Chaucer's prioress was so charitable as to weep for a trapped mouse—that the poor beetle which we tread upon feels a pang as great as when a giant dies—that Dapple was the cherished friend of Sancho—are chief among the few cases which occur to us, where regard for animals is implied in the best known books of the past. Princes and heroes have had their favourites, four-legged or feathered, hawk or horse or hound, and the coursers of Achilles, the dog of Ulysses, and the Cid's steed Baviaca, have their place in romance and in history; but their favour was born rather of pride than of affection, and these are but slight instances to set against so many ages of mere chattelage.

But what a wealth of pleasant companionship do we now enjoy in the society of those four-legged familiars without whom no household seems complete! and how largely do their representatives figure in the literature and art of the present century! the affectionate portraiture by pen and brush being both the natural result of that kindlier feeling, and the means of rendering it deeper and wider. Looking backward to the now remote beginning of the vista of life through which we have journeyed, the best-loved books of our childhood were those in which regard for animals was directly or indirectly inculcated; the indirect lesson being, however, much the most impressive. Thus when *Æsop*, desiring to satirise or instruct mankind through the medium of animals, represents his lions, dogs, foxes, monkeys, and cranes, as not merely conversing, but delivering didactic discourses and holding political debates, it is impossible for the reader who possesses the ardent faculty of belief and the plastic imagination which are the choicest endowments of childhood, not to invest real animals with some of the faculties imputed to the creations of the fabulist. Fairy tales, too, resort largely to the animal world for machinery, and the grimalkin on the hearth-rug rises immensely in the estimation of the juvenile student of 'Puss in Boots' as a possible personator of the agent of the Marquis of Carabas, and an artful plotter, greatly superior to mere men in the devising of stratagems. The little bright-eyed nibblers behind the wainscot have something of "the consecration and the poet's dream" reflected on them by the rhymed history of 'The Town and Country Mice.' The solemn ape, surveying mankind from the top of an organ, or meditating gloomily in his cage in a caravan, may well be suspected of being other than he seems, considering that, in the same form, a Calender, a king's son, was once disguised by power-

ful enchantment. The hare, darting from a clump of fern at the approach of the feminine intruder in white frock, blue sash, cotton socks, and bare calves, is invested with most pathetic interest in the eyes of the wondering gazer, by the recollection of that other hare whose many friends so utterly failed her in the hour of need. Far, indeed, from looking on birds and beasts as "the lower animals," the youth whose childish sentiments of wonder and companionship have been thus cultivated regards the creatures around him with affection not unmixed with respect, as the possessors of many faculties which he does not share, the thinkers of many thoughts unknown to him, the pilgrims in many paths apart from his; while, nevertheless, they have so much in common with him as to constitute ground for intimacy and friendship. Children of this stamp, of whatever degree, going forth to their sports, whether on the well-kept lawn or the village green, are pretty sure to be accompanied by a dog—perhaps a skye with a blue ribbon, perhaps a nondescript cur in a leather collar, made by the paternal hand of the cobbler,—while the youngest of the party bears with him a great tomcat, whose eyes are seen patiently winking between his uncomfortably upstretched legs over the bearer's pinafores shoulder, and whose tail (from the equality in their stature) drags on the ground; and, in such cases, Vixen and grey Tom, far from being mere passive appendages to the amusements of the hour, are looked on as sage confederates, of great experience in the art of rightly spending a holiday. As a childhood of this kind merges into youth, its progressive literature still aids in nourishing that love for animals which has often been a distinguishing characteristic of the men of genius who stamp their spirit on the age. Scott's great hounds—Fang, the gaunt friend of Gurth

the swineherd; Roswal, guardian of the standard for Kenneth of Scotland; Bevis, companion of Sir Henry Lee; and Luath, beloved of the Lady of the Lake—are magnificent; and as for small dogs, has he not given to the whole tribe of Dandie Dinmonts a local habitation and a name? Bulwer's Sir Isaac is a careful and reverential study, by a great master, of a highly but not preternaturally gifted dog. Dickens has doubly and trebly proved himself a dog-fancier, by his portraits of Diogenes, the enemy of Mr Toots; and Gyp, adored by Dora; and Boxer, the associate of John Peerybingle, who took an obtrusive interest in the baby: besides which he has devoted a whole paper of his 'Uncommercial Traveller' to dogs, especially those who keep blind men, and has added to his animal gallery a capital pony and a miraculous raven. George Eliot has given Adam Bede's friend, the schoolmaster, a female dog of great merit, and has bestowed a vast amount of affectionate skill on the portrait of the ape Annibal, in the 'Spanish Gypsy.' Then what reverence for the wearers of fur and feathers is implied in the works of Landseer!—what sympathy with them in the popularity of those world-famous pictures!—though we could wish that some incidents had remained uncommemorated by Sir Edwin's brush, such as the fox sneaking up to prey on the dead stags locked in each other's horns, and the transfixed otter writhing round to bite the shaft of the spear, which are simply abominable. Nor, amidst the many delineators of animals who adorn the age—the Bonheurs, Ansdella, Coopers, Weirs, Willises—must Leech be forgotten. What arrogance in his fat lapdogs, what fun and mischief and frank good-fellowship in his Scotch terriers, what spirit in his hounds and horses! The youth thus sustained in his finer tastes by great examples, enters manhood,

and passes through it, in constant friendly communion with relations and dependants and associates of every kind. His horses are his trusted familiars; if a sportsman, he is cordial with his dogs, rides well forward to hounds (though never to the extreme distress or injury of his good steed), and with his whole life gives the lie to those maudlin humanitarians who insist that cruelty constitutes the pleasure of sport. His mother instilled, and his sisters share, his sympathies for the inarticulate races. How infinitely does that girl add to her attractions who thinks more of her spaniel or her collie, her superannuated pony or antediluvian macaw, than of the most cherished inanimate possession, not excepting the mysterious structure of her back hair! Memory and imagination come in to enhance affection: the old donkey in the paddock, as he approaches her for his daily crust with his exalted ears bent forward, reminds her of the childhood which she still recollects with delight, though not, as yet, with regret. The trills of her blackbird in his wicker cage, placed there because he was found in the wood with a broken wing, cause her to think of the Spring, when a young maid's no less than a young man's fancy "lightly turns to thoughts of love." The gay parroquet, in its gilded palace, suggests to her, in its rich green, the foliage of tropical forests, in its splendid scarlet the flowers which glow amidst the leaves; and when its form of grace and beauty is lifeless, it is consigned to its garden-tomb with tears which well become the eyes whose glances many lovers watch for. If her acts of charity to the featherless bipeds around her are many, not fewer are those which benefit the unfortunate and the helpless who have no language wherein to speak their complaints; and when she has children, she teaches them, as a lesson not inferior to any to be

found in Dr Watts, or Dr Paley, or Dr Newman, or any other Doctor whatsoever, that

"He prayeth well who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast."

We will now, after the manner of great moralists, such as he who depicted the careers of the Industrious and Idle Apprentices, give the reverse of this picture, in the horrible imp of empty head and stony heart, who has been trained to regard the creatures around him as the mere ministers of his pleasure and his pride, and who, in fact, represents in its worst form the former state of feeling respecting animals. Provided, almost in his cradle, by his unnatural parents, with puppies and kittens whereon to wreak his evil propensities, he treats them, to the best of his ability, as the infant Hercules treated the serpents, and, when provoked to retaliate with tooth or claw, they are ordered, with his full concurrence, to immediate execution. A little later he hails the periodical pregnancies of the ill-used family cat as so many opportunities in store for drowning her progeny. The fables, so dear to lovable childhood, of lambs and wolves, apes and foxes, are rejected by his practical mind as rubbishy lies. All defenceless animals falling into his power are subject to martyrdom by lapidation. Show him a shy bird of rare beauty on moor or heath, in wood or valley, and the soulless goblin immediately shies a stone at it. Stray tabbies are the certain victims of his bull-terrier; and the terrier itself, when it refuses to sit up and smoke a pipe, or to go into the river after a water-rat, is beaten and kicked without mercy. He goes with a relish to see the keeper shoot old Ponto, who was whelped ten years ago in the kennel, and comes in to give his sisters (who don't care) appreciative details of the execution. As a sportsman he is a tyrant to his dogs, a butcher on his horse,

and, sitting on that blown and drooping steed, he looks on with disgusting satisfaction when the fox is broken up. Throughout life he regards all his animated possessions (including his unhappy wife) simply as matters of a certain money value, to be made to pay or to be got rid of. Not to pursue his revolting career through all its stages, we will merely hint that he probably ends by committing a double parricide; and being righteously condemned to the gallows, is reprieved only by the inappropriate tenderness of the Home Secretary.

To one who considers the subject, it will be apparent that the influences at work in favour of animals are of a nature to gain in force, and that their friends, constantly increasing in number, will end by shouldering their foes altogether to the shady side of public sentiment. It is now a very old story that a law exists for the prevention of cruelty to animals, who thus for the first time acquire a legal footing in the world. But laws are often inoperative, unless it is the interest of somebody to enforce them; and as the injured parties cannot in this case apply to the nearest magistrate for a warrant, in order to help them in the matter certain worthy men and women long ago formed a Society, which is increasing in prosperity every year. Many deeds of cruelty are still done which cannot be punished or detected; but in thousands of cases which would formerly have escaped even reprobation, wronged animals now appear in court by "their next friend" (one of the Society's officers), and make the perpetrators pay in purse or person. Not only is a check thus imposed on small private atrocities, like the bruising and lashing of horses by brutal waggoners, the martyring of cats and dogs by blackguard boys, and the battering of donkeys by ferocious costermongers, but heavy blows are also dealt at such organised

cruelties as the crowding of animals on rough sea voyages in unfit vessels, the transmission of others on long journeys by rail without food or water, the shearing and starving of sheep in winter, the setting of steel traps for wild creatures, and the wanton destruction of sea-fowl and rare birds. A society having the same objects exists in France, and in that country, as well as in Australia and several States of the American Union, stringent laws protect many kinds of birds. Kindred societies with special objects have also been formed among us—drinking-troughs for animals in hot weather abound in the metropolis, and a Home has been established for Lost Dogs. No kind of animal misery is more common or more lamentable than that of these outcasts, who may be seen any day in one or other of our London thoroughfares, purposely lost in many cases by owners who are unwilling to pay the five-shilling dog-tax, though a single day's abstinence from drunkenness, or a very brief sacrifice of pleasure or comfort in each year, would suffice to retain the old companion. The first stage of being thus astray in the wilderness of London is marked by a wild galloping to and fro, with an occasional pause to gaze down cross-streets. At length, hopeless and wearied, the lost one sinks into a slow trot, occasionally lifting his hollow anxious eyes to scan an approaching face, and almost seeming to shake his head in despair as he lowers them again. Then comes the period of ravenous hunting in gutters and corners for chance scraps, of gazing fixedly down kitchen areas, of sleeping coiled up on door-steps, and of pertinacious haunting of neighbourhoods where some hand has once bestowed a morsel. All those avenues of stone which we call streets are, to the poor starveling, more barren of food than the desert, but he knows how the interiors abound in meat and drink; he knows, too, that any

chance passenger, whose face attracts his canine sympathies, may introduce him to one of these scenes of plenty, and he attaches himself, for a time, humbly and wistfully, to some one whose visage hits his fancy, and who, perhaps, is never aware of the thin shadow which follows his footsteps. At last both appetite and strength have departed, the recollection of his home has become an uncertain dream, and he retires into a corner to die, unless, in some slum, the interesting family of the rat-catcher, the costermonger, the dog-stealer, or the sporting cobbler, seizing him joyfully as their lawful prey, proceed to ascertain by experiment what capacity, not for nourishment but for agony, may be still left in him. By recent regulations the police are authorised to conduct to their nearest station these unfortunates, and to transmit them from thence to the Home at Holloway. We once visited the retreat, situated in a courtyard in the outskirts of that fashionable suburb. Our entrance was signalled by the hasty withdrawal of a number of cats, whose stealthy profiles were presently seen on the surrounding walls, wearing all the aspect of guilty evasion, for, in fact, their enterprise had been predatory, and directed against the dogs' food. The dogs themselves, seated in rows on the floor and on benches, were few in number and choice in kind—high-bred deep-jowled bloodhounds, whose home had been the castle-yard of some great seigneur—poodles who would have been ornaments to the bench of any court of judicature—weak-eyed, pink-nosed, querulous Maltese in blue ribbons—toy-terriers in splendid collars like orders of knighthood—pugs with muzzles so short that one wondered where their tongues could be—and intelligent skyes who whined and frisked at the approach of well-clad visitors; all of them at that moment being doubtless sought for throughout London by young men of good character, in genteel

liveries, whose places were endangered by the carelessness which had caused the loss of the favourites. On inquiring where the commoner sorts of dogs might be, we found that, as regarded them, the Home might have been properly described as their long home, inasmuch as all who were not likely to be claimed were immediately put to death and buried. It seemed dubious whether the animals thus permanently relieved from want, would, if consulted, regard this method of disposal as a high favour; and, moreover, so very inexpensive a provision did not seem to call for large contributions. Later inquiries, however, have produced answers describing a more favourable arrangement; and it seems that only those whose life may be considered a burthen to them are now destroyed, the rest having situations procured for them of a kind that was not quite clearly apparent to us; farmed out, perhaps, like parish apprentices, and, let us hope, at least as well cared-for.

It would seem, then, that the fancy in which we indulged at the beginning of this paper, of more genial relations being established between the dominant and the less fortunate races of the earth, is not without prospect of realisation. The Societies we have mentioned may in course of time be extended till they cease to be separate societies any longer, by including all the right-minded and right-hearted of the human race, each of whom will be as vigilant as any official to prevent and detect cruelty. To lead "a dog's life of it" may come to mean universally a not unpleasant state of existence—"slaving like a horse" will denote a wholesome and moderate share of labour—and "monkey's allowance" may represent a fair amount of halfpence in proportion to the kicks. As time goes on, the enthusiast may perhaps begin to catch glimpses of the renewal of that other

period which tradition and fable point to in the past, when the close kinship existing between the articulate and inarticulate sylvan races led to a deeper mutual understanding and more intimate communion. In times when the doctrine that all classes ought to be represented in Parliament is favourably received, the next step would obviously be to elect members for brute constituencies, or at least to agitate for that result. The effect of a great cattle-meeting in Smithfield, conducted with much lowing and bellowing, and followed by large processions of horned animals through our principal thoroughfares, could hardly fail to produce important constitutional changes. A charge of cab-horses out on strike, conducted by some equine Beales against the park-palings with a view to pasturing inside, might extract large concessions from a weak Cabinet—while a monster-meeting of aggrieved dogs under the clock-tower at Westminster, howling their complaints to the moon, and vociferously invoking “a plague on both our Houses,” might be attended with legislative results not inferior to those which Mr Bright anticipated when he advised the coercion of Parliament by a like expedient. Later, when progress shall happily have brought us to government by pure majorities, that epoch may commence which *Æsop* seems to hint at in the fable where the lion talks of turning sculptor and representing the beast astride of the man. Once, while pursuing this somewhat fantastic train of thought, we beheld in a kind of vision, such as visited Bunyan and Dante, a scene of imaginary retribution awaiting the human race at the hands of the oppressed. Multitudes of human beings were systematically fattened as food for the carnivora. They were frequently forwarded to great distances by train, in trucks, without food or water. Large numbers of infants

were constantly boiled down to form broth for invalid animals. In over-populous districts babies were given to malicious young cats and dogs to be taken away and drowned. Boys were hunted by terriers, and stoned to death by frogs. Mice were a good deal occupied in setting man-traps, baited with toasted cheese, in poor neighbourhoods. Gouty old gentlemen were put into the shafts of night-cabs, and forced to totter, on their weak ankles and diseased joints, to clubs, where they picked up fashionable young colts, and took them, at such pace as whipcord could extract, to St John’s Wood, to visit chestnut fillies. Flying figures in scarlet coats, buckskins, and top-boots were run into by packs of foxes. Old cock-grouse strutted out for a morning’s sport, and came in to talk of how many brace of country gentlemen they had bagged. The fate of gamekeepers was appalling; they lived a precarious life in holes and caves; they were perpetually harried and set upon by game and vermin; held fast in steel traps, their toes were nibbled by stoats and martens; finally, their eyes picked out by owls and kites, they were gibbeted alive on trees, head downwards, when pole-cats mounted sentry over them, favouring the sufferers with their agreeable presence till the termination of their martyrdom. In one especially tragic case, a corpulent and short-sighted naturalist in spectacles dodged about painfully amid the topmost branches of a wood, while a *Mias* underneath, armed with a gun, inflicted on him dreadful wounds. A veterinary surgeon of Alfort was stretched on his back, his arms and legs secured to posts, in order that a horse might cut him up alive for the benefit of an equine audience; but the generous steed, incapable of vindictive feelings, with one disdainful stamp on the midriff crushed the wretch’s life out.

Though these visions are but

such stuff as dreams are made of, yet, nevertheless, is their fabric not altogether baseless. Besides the signs which we have enumerated as indicating that the relationship of the tribes of the earth with the human family are more conscientiously recognised than of old, animals have lately achieved the important success of acquiring their own especial organ in the press.* We do not mean that animals perform the part either of editor or contributors to this periodical—we wish they did. What a poem would the ostrich write with his claw on the sand of the desert, and how priceless, compared with the verses even of laureates, would be the transcript thereof! "*Mes Larmes*, by a Crocodile"—sensational, no doubt, beyond French or English precedent, excelling Sand, or Sue, or Braddon—would, as a serial, make the fortune of any magazine. Could the lion translate for us that far gaze of his, which, disregarding the Sunday visitors in front of his cage, is fixed on some imaginary desert horizon—what extract from ancient or modern poetry could compete with it? What a variety of subject and of style would thus open on us, far beyond the diversities of human authorship—lyric, epic, dramatic, descriptive—defiant outburst and passionate lament—life in innumerable phases, domestic, romantic, gloomy, rap-

turous, cynical, and cheerful! Even without such aid we constantly, though unconsciously, acknowledge their kinship with humanity. The fox, the bear, the bee, the eagle, the lion, the hog, the serpent, the dove, are all types of men and women. Prophetic language calls the worm our sister; and a philosopher of these times defines the Frenchman of the Revolution as a "tiger-ape." We have ourselves heard an indignant lady characterise a too insinuating swain as "that crocodile;" and lately, at a civic feast abounding in calipash and calipee, we observed, or fancied we observed, that many of the guests combined, as in Byron's line, "the rage of the vulture" with "the love of the turtle." And do we not stand in almost humiliating relation to the inevitable crow, who spends so much of his valuable time in imprinting his autograph on the corners of all our eyes, seeming thereby to mark us for his own? Deeply impressed with the closeness and reality of these connections, and deriving no inconsiderable share of the pleasure of life from our keen sense of them, it has been to us not only a pleasure but a solemn duty, often postponed, indeed, but never abandoned, thus to break ground in the corners of a great subject, and to record with pride the sentiments of affection and respect which we entertain for OUR POOR RELATIONS.

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TRADE - UNIONS.

MUCH has been written and spoken about Trade-Unions, and yet public opinion has not settled down into a positive and definite opinion respecting their nature and policy. They are actively at work over the whole country. They possess an enormous organisation, which is every day extending itself more and more over the working population of the nation. They wield a power which can vie with almost any other existing in modern society, and not unfrequently is even superior to that exercised by the law. Their path is marked always by a great exhibition of power, and often by the most illegal and formidable violence. They move vast masses of men with the discipline and concentration of an army; and they carry out a system of government which coerces large numbers of the people. Though unprotected, and even forbidden by the law, they have again and again broken the peace of society by outrages ranging from every form of coercion up to murder. They have measured their strength with the Crown and with Parliament, and, strange to say, have not yet come off defeated. When the whole country was shuddering over the recollection of deeds of crime, they extorted from Parliament a special enactment in their favour. Statesmen have stood aghast at their proceedings; they appointed a Royal Commission to inquire into their nature and their conduct. That Commission uttered an ambiguous voice, and the Thornecliffe union answers by deeds that the power of the Unions is unshaken. Men of great intellectual ability have tried to grapple with the phenomenon; economical and social science has brought its light to bear on the examination of its character; and still no final judgment has been pronounced on the great question, whether its exis-

tence is compatible with the welfare of society. No one disputes that the Unions apply to large bodies of men who owe them no allegiance a coercion which flagrantly defies the first principles of liberty; and yet that coercion goes on unchecked and unpunished. Their continued existence is itself a mystery. It is obvious that bodies which break out into such conduct, and yet not only sustain themselves, but expand in strength and numbers, cannot be made up of pure evil. They must possess somewhere in their organisation principles of good, which give them vitality and endurance. They must command a sympathy which is strong enough to bear them on; and that they do possess such a hold on the minds of many good and able men is revealed by many indications. Political economists of the first rank defend their principles. Statesmen, whose love of order and liberty is undeniable, nevertheless support their cause with warm and unflinching energy. The problems raised by their existence are debated with genuine power and zeal on both sides; but neither scientific authority nor political philosophy has discovered their solution. Like thunder-clouds, they advance against the wind, and can boast of converts of the class of Mr Mill. They present a battle-field of confusion, contradiction, and perplexity. Political opinion knows not what to do with them.

The welfare of a whole nation demands that this perplexity and hesitation should cease. Some practical decision must be adopted; either the Unions must be effectually controlled, or the dominion of the whole working classes of the country must be surrendered into their hands. The call for a thorough examination of the problem is more urgent than ever. The report of

the Royal Commission is no final judgment, it is not even a complete review of all the elements of the problem. It avowedly eschews the discussion of some of the most important economical principles involved in the objects aimed at by Trade-Unions. It fails to cover the whole of the ground in dispute. It does not furnish, therefore, the full information which the public mind requires for pronouncing a decision. The contest, therefore, between the friends and the enemies of Trade-Unions, rages on with unabated vehemence amidst protracted uncertainty on the part of the Government, the Parliament, and the public. We cannot help being convinced that this perplexity arises in no small measure from the want of a precise statement of the economical, and, so to speak, natural elements of the problem. The economical principles, we freely admit, are not the only ones that must be weighed in the solution. There are other considerations, drawn from the very nature of social life, as it exists in a free and civilised community, which must be largely taken into account. To be guilty of bad political economy, if such a charge could be successfully proved, assuredly would not be conclusive of the right of Trade-Unions to exist; but no fair man would deny that if the definite conclusion was established in the public mind that Trade-Unions promoted creeds which were founded upon real error, and were highly injurious to the wealth and prosperity of the people, the disposition to tolerate the proceedings by which they seek to accomplish their objects would be rapidly changed in character. We are not affirming here that the political economy of the Trade-Unions is unsound and mischievous; we only assert that it is of the highest importance that its true character should be ascertained. A Trade-Union is an institution strictly belonging to the domain of political economy. It

seeks to carry out by practical measures results which are distinctly economical. It aims at improving the social condition of the working classes: it seeks the highest remuneration of labour; and for this purpose adopts methods which it conceives will most effectually accomplish this design. We do not say that it must stand or fall, must continue or be suppressed, according to the verdict which its doctrines may receive from the tribunal of economical science; but since it is, in theory at least, a purely economical institution, it concerns the public welfare in the highest degree, that the ends sought by so mighty a force, wielding so real a power over the means, the liberty, and the mode of existence, of such immense bodies of men, should be thoroughly explored.

Influenced, then, by a strong feeling of the necessity for such an investigation, we proceed to state, to the best of our ability, and with as much precision as we can attain, the determining elements of this great problem. Trade-Unions have for their object the attainment of the highest practicable remuneration for labour. Wages, the compensation given to the so-called working classes for their toil, is their specific field of action. They stand on the distinction between capital and labour—between the employer and the workmen; and they confess that it is with the interests of the latter exclusively that they concern themselves. The producers of wealth are thus arrayed by them into two classes, whose pecuniary interests are held to be antagonistic. Their aim and intention—their *raison d'être*—is avowed to be, by the organising of an intelligent and effective combination, to give strength to the labourer in his demand for remuneration from his employer. We need not tarry here on the well-known truth that this distinction does not correspond accurately with facts, and that most of the employers are them-

selves workmen and labourers, and receive a portion of their remuneration regularly as wages; and, on the other side, that most members of Trade-Unions are capitalists and possess capital, either as tools or in some other form. For the practical part of this discussion, the classification adopted may be regarded as sufficiently accurate. It rests on the general fact that the employer is the man who contracts for wages with the labourer, and owns the product which results from the application of capital and labour. Wages, then, imply a contract entered into for a certain definite remuneration, and a contract virtually implies a bargain. Wages and profit, the remuneration of both the capitalist and the labourer, are derived from one common fund—the gross produce of the industry carried on by both; and the bargain thus ultimately becomes the question of its distribution, its division between the two parties who concurred in generating the wealth. We thus reach the first element of the problem—the gross produce, and the obvious interest which each of the two parties has that it should be as large as possible. The more wealth that there is to be divided, the better off is the community, taken as a whole, and the greater are the means for remunerating the services and the sacrifices of all. Any policy or practice, therefore, which tends directly to restrict the amount of wealth produced, is so far bad and injurious. But this principle must not be interpreted as being, by itself alone, decisive of any method of employing capital and labour: it may easily be limited by considerations of another order. It is possible, for instance, that in a particular country the institution of slavery might bring out the creation of the largest quantity of wealth; yet it would be justly maintained on the other side that it was better to be poorer than to have slaves. It is equally conceivable that in certain states of society the largest amount of agri-

cultural produce might be raised by a population living under a low standard of civilisation, and that a high civilisation might be accounted well bought at the price of a lower agricultural produce. The principle, then, of providing for the largest practicable production of wealth is not an absolute one, but it is dominant within its own legitimate range, all other circumstances being the same. Those regulations of industry which interfere with the greatness of its yield are vicious, and call for removal. They injure the wellbeing of the receivers of wages, as well as of the whole people generally.

Secondly, the numbers of the population are a most determining factor of this great problem. The quantity of the wealth produced is limited: the number of those who are to partake of it must necessarily largely influence the size of the share which will ultimately fall to each. It is substantially a question of food. It is of the utmost consequence that the true state of the facts, the real and most positive law of existence, should be thoroughly understood by all. All animals possess a power of multiplication which surpasses the power of the land to provide food for their sustenance. By one force or other, their numbers are kept on a level with the supply of food. If more are born, they perish by the working of an inevitable law. Man forms no exception to this paramount necessity: human beings can be generated in indefinitely larger numbers than the land is able to support. The wider expansion of the population is kept down by a power which, if its workings are obscure, is nevertheless inexorable. Pressure must exist somewhere under all possible forms of society, which prevents the unlimited multiplication of the race. The operation of this law is easily disguised by a state of civilisation such as is found in England. The relation of the inhabitants to the supply of

food is obscured in this country by the circumstance that a large portion of the food of its inhabitants is derived from foreign lands; hence it is less obvious that the number of English men and women alive in England is proportionate to the power of the land to maintain them. Yet it is not the less real on that account. By means of her coal, and other resources, England is able to produce commodities for which other nations will give her food in exchange; and, were it not that science had so enormously extended the facilities for the transport of heavy weights, England would have seen more clearly than she does now the close dependence of the numbers of her people on their ability to acquire food. On the other hand, it may be said that though the numbers of the population must ultimately be determined by the food obtained from the land, still, many more human beings might be supported in England by a different distribution of the food available for sustenance. That is so, no doubt. The rich consume much more food than is necessary, and waste a great deal more besides. It is perfectly true, therefore, that a rigid allotment of the quantity of food actually raised at a given time would provide a full sufficiency for many who do not, as it is, procure enough, and probably also save many from indirect but yet real starvation. But even after this operation had been completed, the irrepressible law would assert its power. These well-fed beings must not multiply beyond the supply of food, and, if that remains stationary, must have no more children than would replace the parents, or else a reduction of comfort, and in the end death, in one form or other, would inevitably correct the excess. It cannot be otherwise: it is the law of existence imposed on all animals. We do not say that in such a country as England many would literally die of hunger, though this happened

in the past, and happens in our own day, in Ireland, in Orissa, and other regions desolated by famines: but the deficiency of food would generate want of clothing, insufficient shelter, fever, and other maladies destructive of human life. France furnishes a striking illustration of the working of this law. That country has often been quoted by Mr Mill and other political economists as an example of successful adaptation of population to food. But by what process is this achieved? Dr Barthillon will inform us. In the seven departments surrounding Paris, the death-rate of infants under one year of age amounts to a mortality varying from 288 to 378 in 1000. This gigantic destruction of human life may, no doubt, be partly explained by the action of moral causes, but these moral causes themselves are in no small degree affected by the general wellbeing of the people; and, in any case, it reveals how effectual and how stern is the limit imposed on numbers by the never-ceasing action of natural law. Whatever power aims at dealing with the distribution of the produce of industry, above all in the matter of food—be it the State, or Politicians, or Philosophers, or Clergy, or Trade Unions—all alike must reckon with this mighty force, this supreme law, which declares that the undue multiplication of human beings will ever be corrected by death.

The third element of our problem is founded on a practical, if not conscious, recognition of this law. Misery and death are not mere avengers of evil. Man's nature has been so constituted by his Creator, that the penalty which punishes also calls forth the will and the effort to arrest the continuance of the malady. The desire to better himself, to remove what distresses or pains, to reach to greater good, to a higher state, is implanted in the lowest depths of man's being. From this great central need all civilisa-

tion has sprung. Some few populations have lived on under such circumstances of barbarous existence as never to have learnt progress, and when they have come in contact with civilisation, to have been incapable of assimilating its elements, and to have dwindled by the side of the superior race. But it has been wholly otherwise with the vast majority of mankind. Peoples have been seen to grow and to expand; and this fact by itself incontestably demonstrates that they have learnt how to deal successfully with the law of population. They have lessened the amount of human suffering, and by the acquisition of wealth have risen to a higher standard of life. The methods by which they have harmonised numbers with food have been various. Sometimes the sovereign power has interfered in the contraction of marriage; sometimes a low morality has sanctioned the destruction of infants; swarms have emigrated and relieved pressure at home, or else energetic and intelligent industry has for a while kept the supply of food, and the necessities dependent on food, on a level with the inhabitants of the land. But a principle yet more powerful than all these has been incessantly at work, and by its beneficent operation has effected a still higher harmony between numbers and wealth. It is summed up in the word civilisation. Its dwelling-place is human feeling, the habits contracted by moral and reasonable beings, the tone of mind of the people, their ultimate feeling respecting human life and the conditions which render it worth the having. It creates a standard of comfort and enjoyment, however moderate, which comes into direct antagonism with the instinct of multiplication as soon as civilisation has advanced so far as to adopt such a standard, and to root it in the feelings of the people. The tendency to reproduce encounters a very powerful check in the

thought of the misery which imprudence is sure to entail on parents and offspring. Thus the men reflect before they commit themselves to marriage. It accustoms them to think of what the fate of their children may be in the future; it inspires the thought in the young man to wait till he can acquire a cottage, or have permanent employment in a factory, or can see his way reasonably against a possible descent into misery. This power is the resultant of many forces, of moral, social, and physical elements combined. And precisely as the absence of this principle, of this desire to secure comforts rendered necessary by habit, demoralises a man, and may bring him and his family down to the margin where the waves of starvation define the circle of existence, so its continued presence tends to generate a progressive rise in that standard of habit which is the direct antagonist of excessive reproduction. A people which has accustomed itself to live on wheaten bread, for instance, will check reckless multiplication more effectively than one that consents to live on potatoes ~~and~~ ^{alone}. Not only does it escape the demoralising influence of the long period of idleness which the scant tillage required for this root imposes on those whose sole resource it is; but further, also, which is much more important yet, it admits of a descent to an inferior food before civilisation is submerged, and that descent calls forth energetic exertion and resistance. The desire to save becomes intensified, waste is checked, the effort to hold on for better times, and not to plunge into immediate despair, is called forth into vigorous activity. The disagreeableness of these operations acts powerfully on the inclination to marry. It is well known that in such a country as England, prosperous trade multiplies marriages, and times of depression are marked by a diminution both of marriages and

births. The desire to regain the lost standard of comfort works powerfully on every class of the people. The rich apply their wealth and their intelligence to mitigate the sufferings of their poorer neighbours; they spend less on direct consumption; they are willing to apply their wealth to additional draining, to agricultural labour, and other reproductive works; they assist in providing the temporary relief of emigration. By these and similar efforts the struggle is carried on against the depression and its causes: population is checked on the one side, on the other the store of capital is augmented.

Such are the chief processes by which civilisation, when conducted on sound and on broad economical bases, contends against that law of reproduction which, if uncontrolled, is limited by death only. We have described them at greater length, because, though well known to all who have studied this great subject, they are still sadly unfamiliar to a large portion of the public, and not least to many of those who, by such institutions as Trade-Unions, practically deal with the problem of the numbers and the condition of the people.

There remains to be mentioned, in the fourth place, as a constituent element of the problem before us, the motives which act on the capitalist and the labourer to induce them to devote their respective actions to the production of wealth. The labourer, it is manifest, toils simply to support life. Under the ordinary circumstances of humanity, his power to accumulate capital is small—indeed can hardly be said to exist. Individuals amongst the working classes rise into the class of capitalists, but the great bulk of the wage-receiving population are content if they can but maintain themselves by their daily labour to the end of their days. Here the instinct of reproduction is strong enough to prevent the accumulation of capital. Men who are

generally satisfied with their condition will people up, to use a now common expression, to that limit. Their standard of life may be raised; but, the standard settled, numbers will forbid any important acquisition of capital by the general body. At the same time, it must be borne in mind that the prospect of acquiring large remuneration for labour is a great stimulant to energy and intelligence, and that energy and intelligence play an exceedingly prominent part in the raising of the standard. This consideration is of great moment in judging the policy of Trade-Unions, as we shall see hereafter.

On the other hand, the motive which determines the accumulation of capital is the expectation of an adequate reward for the sacrifice which it involves. If there is an increase of capital—if a larger quantity of the wealth of a nation is devoted to the promotion of a new field of industry—it can come only from saving; and to save means not to consume all one's income, in whatever form it may be realised, in the way of enjoyment. An augmentation of capital necessarily implies that present gratification has been given up for the sake of future profit. The man who applies a portion of his annual wealth to an industrial undertaking, be it draining, or extra manuring, or the opening of a mine, or the building of ships and factories, gives up the pleasure of spending for the sake of acquiring greater riches. He will make this sacrifice of present pleasure the more energetically just in proportion as the hope of future reward holds out brighter expectations. This is not a law of political economy; it is a principle of human nature, of which it is the duty of all sound political economy to take cognisance. The Highland chieftain of the past felt small inclination to devote his means to the improved cultivation of his lands. The prospect of adequate compen-

sation in the accumulation of increased wealth was too dark under the agricultural and social conditions of his day. He preferred to gratify his pride by doling out a scanty subsistence to idle followers who camped on the hillside, and surrounded his court with the ostentatious display of a vast retinue of dependants. Again, before steam and mechanical science had enlarged the power of man to give marvellous productiveness to industry, in Holland and other countries the rate of profit on the employment of capital was so feeble as greatly to weaken the motive to divert wealth from unproductive to productive consumption—to make men willing to forego present enjoyment for the sake of increasing their wealth in the future. If no skill or effort were able to procure more than one per cent of interest on any safe investment—if agriculture had reached the limit at which additional draining or manuring yielded no return of importance—society would have reached the stationary state when men consume their incomes as they receive them, when progress in well-being would have come to an end, and when industry would be fed by no higher motive than the fear of decay and starvation. But we have only to turn our eyes to a thriving colony to see the reverse of this picture. There a virgin soil yields enormous returns to the relatively small labour bestowed on tillage; industry meets ample rewards from the abundance of its produce; and there every nerve is strained to devote every possible saving to the clearing of woods, the stocking of farms, and the improvement of roads and rivers. Wealth, as rapidly as it is accumulated, is applied with eager energy, not to luxurious enjoyment, but to capital—to the construction of every kind of improvement which will secure the riches that offer themselves to labour. Profits are so high as to fill men's minds with incessant

thoughts about building and clearing and stocking.

Such are the elements of the great economical problem with which Trade-Unions profess to deal. They stand forth as the advocates of one of the parties in the joint production of wealth. They proclaim that the workman requires help for the attainment of his right, and that help they propose to give him by means of combination. Let him not stand alone, they say; let him act in union with his fellow-workmen, and their joint action will secure for him his due. Accordingly Trade-Unions are associated combinations, with the requisite organisation of government, subordination, and money. These organisations are constructed for each trade separately, but they give great facility to many trades to act together for a common purpose. Moreover, their power, and the machinery by which it is worked, are not only directed against the other sharer in the product of industry—the capitalist—but are also made to exercise considerable pressure on those of their fellow-workmen who refuse to join the Union. This is the most grave feature in this complex machine, for it obviously comes in contact with the fundamental principle of liberty. This pressure frequently becomes coercion, carried out not unfrequently by conduct which the law pronounces to be criminal; and it therefore becomes a duty of supreme social and political importance to understand clearly the spirit and the policy of these associations.

The ends which Trade-Unions pursue must be divided into two classes. First, they seek to obtain the best possible wages at a given time and place; and, secondly, they have framed a definite policy for regulating the economical position of the labouring classes.

With respect to the first of these objects, it cannot be disputed that

a single labourer, acting by himself alone, without connection with his fellow-workmen, is obviously weak in bargaining with an employer. The conditions are not perfectly equal on both sides. The labourer is in danger of destitution; the master may be little, probably not at all, injured by his refusal to work. Thus stated, the question must be decided in favour of combination; the determination of the workmen to stand by one another in obtaining adequate wages is unassailable in respect of principle. But then this statement does not cover the whole case. Is the working man really single and unassociated? Does he stand alone face to face with his rich master, and has he no support from the co-operation of others? No doubt a master, or group of masters, may perform an act of tyranny on a particular man, but such an exceptional case is not the one under discussion. We are dealing here with an ordinary labourer who debates with an employer the wage he shall receive. Is his an isolated bargain, in which the labourer is truly and practically alone? Orders have come in to the master, and he is in need of men; he offers a specific wage to the workman, and the offer is rejected. What must be the next step of the master?—to seek out another man, and to repeat the offer. The offer is again rejected; and the question then becomes, Is there any connection, conscious or unconscious, between these two acts, these two refusals of the two men? Manifestly there is a very real *solidarité*, an intimate and true union between them; and that union is their common knowledge of the state of the market, their perception of the strength of the demand for labour compared with its supply. Both the men feel it: each knows that the master will not get his work done on cheaper terms, and that, as the orders must be executed, he will perforce accept the rate of wages

they ask for. This practical connection of the labourers with one another is strong enough to raise wages: they need no help in their bargaining; when trade is brisk, wages rise. This is a truth which even the Trade-Unions acknowledge; for the account they give of their action in this particular of the rise and fall of wages is, that they are quiet when wages advance, but that they resist a fall. The sphere of their action, therefore, in which they can render assistance to the individual labourer by combination, is reduced to the case of trade growing slack, and the masters offering diminished wages. Here, we admit at once, the connection of the one workman with the other is at an end. The master can without loss discharge the labourer who holds out for the old wages, for the supply of labour now exceeds his wants, and with hunger staring the labourer in the face, he knows that the second man will accept the wages refused by the first. The labourer may thus stand at a disadvantage. When trade is prosperous the master inevitably must concede the rise of wages claimed by each man, if that claim is founded on a true estimate of the demand; and this information he may acquire from the feeling of the market. But when the position is reversed, he has no means of knowing whether the offer of the master is unjust. If it is an unreasonable attempt at depression, it cannot be denied that the assistance from a Union, which enables him to live, may furnish him, in concert with his brother Unionist, with the means of enforcing justice on the employer. But the question arises, Is a Trade-Union the best machinery which can be devised for providing material support to workmen for resisting a fall of wages? And then there is the still more important question, What means has the Union for acquiring the necessary information on which to ground its de-

cree as to the wages to be demanded? It is always a complicated question; each case and each trade has its own specialties. The knowledge must be obtained of a large number of facts derived from the most various sources, and generally most difficult to ascertain and to appreciate. What warrant does the organisation of a Trade-Union furnish of the ability to investigate the causes and the limits of a retrogression in a trade? nay, what security does it present that, even if it possesses the ability, it would also have the will to exercise it? The evidence before the Royal Commission has disclosed the principle on which the Unions act. "They look only at their own interests; they take account of nothing else." Yet surely the question at issue must be looked at from the master's point of view as well as from the workman's. His position and his education enable him to discover more easily and more surely than the labourer the causes which have brought about the slackness of business, the probability of their lasting, and the extent to which they may carry the contraction of the trade. These are essential elements for the formation of a trustworthy judgment on the amount of wages which the business can afford. An employer who believes that the slackness is due to temporary causes, will pause before he drives away valuable workmen from his factory; on the other hand, if the drooping orders have a deeper and more abiding source, a prompt recognition of the fact, by a corresponding reduction of wages, may be the best and kindest intimation to the labourer to prepare for harder times, or, it may be, for a change of occupation. It is now an admitted truth, that the forestallers who buy up corn, when a deficient harvest is ascertained, render a most valuable service to the poor, by forcing them to economise in time. The same principle may render equally good service in other trades.

"Oh," reply the Trade-Unions, "these nicer calculations are not our province. We adopt more direct and more effectual methods. When wages sink below what we think right, we have recourse to the only process which will accurately test whether the master is honest and accurate in his diminution of wages, or whether he is seeking to enrich himself by defrauding the labourers of their due. In no other way can it be ascertained what the real facts of the situation are." In reply to this we will not urge that such a mode of making the experiment, so reckless and so coarse, may often plunder an employer of his property, in his unwillingness to encounter the ruinous loss of a stoppage; we will point out rather that a strike is an exceedingly costly proceeding; that the organisation which is prepared in readiness to deliver the blow, is extremely expensive; that the wisdom of the policy which deliberately encounters this expense depends on the assumption that the reduction of wages proposed by the masters has no foundation in the actual state of the trade. If this assumption is erroneous—if the business no longer yields the same profit, and can be maintained only by consenting to sales at a lower price—then a strike, with its vast cost and protracted suffering, has been a wanton and self-inflicted calamity. The history of strikes records endless failures to combat a fall of wages, which neither masters nor workmen could avert. Intense distress has preyed on whole districts, huge bodies of men have been fed out of funds destined for support in old age and sickness, the production of wealth has been interrupted, and the means of all have been fearfully diminished, and yet at last the strike has failed to accomplish its object, the workmen have been compelled to surrender, and "the inexorable logic of facts" has proclaimed that all this misery and this loss were a pure and wanton waste.

The advocates of Trade-Unions, therefore, are called upon to show that the expense incurred in the maintenance of the organisation for carrying out a strike, and the vast loss occasioned by the cessation of industry and the support of multitudes in enforced idleness, are profitable investments of the subscriptions of the Unionists, and are compensated by adequate advantages which atone for the failure which often attends their action. The funds of the Union have vanished, and its members have endured, so far as these unsuccessful strikes are concerned, a large amount of useless suffering: where is the gain which makes up for and justifies these sacrifices? Granted that a succession of defeats is not necessarily decisive of a campaign; but where is the victory that reconciles the judgment to the destruction which it has cost to attain it? Many strikes are successful, is the reply; the masters often yield the disputed point, and the constant fear of a strike effectually conquers the perpetual impulse of selfishness in the masters to appropriate an unjust share of the profits of industry to the injury of the labourers. We hold this answer to be insufficient as a justification of the machinery of Unions for ascertaining the true rate of wages. The unsuccessful strikes are too numerous and too disastrous to be compensated by the pecuniary gain won by the enforcement of the disputed wages. There is no reasonable ground for the presumption that the difference of wages extorted from masters bears any proportion to the loss caused by the great diminution of wealth caused by a strike. The waste of the food and clothing of the capital supplied by the Union to the men on strike, and the non-production of that wealth which a continuance of work would have created, constitute unliquidated items which the balance-sheets of Unions do not settle. We heartily wish to speak with entire fairness on this

important point. We are willing to admit freely that if the failure of a strike shows that the master judges more correctly the position of the trade than the men, the successful strike may demonstrate that the masters, in some cases, did not give the men their due. We say "in some cases;" because no fair advocate of Unions would deny that not unfrequently when the men come off conquerors in the struggle, the knowledge of the injury done to their mills and factories by the cessation of work drives the masters into submission to demands which cannot be conceded except at the sacrifice of profits which are incontestably their own. Some deduction—we believe it to be a considerable one—must be made on the score of this motive, from the cogency of the proof that successful strikes show that the men were receiving inadequate wages. There still remains, we are satisfied, an immense balance of loss in the cost of Unions and their strikes which is not compensated on the profit side of the account.

The same consideration furnishes the same reply to the alleged efficacy of the agency of fear. Every strike is a proof that the masters are pressed with demands which they feel to be so unreasonable as to necessitate resistance; and strikes are more than numerous enough to show that, even in the opinion of the men themselves, fear alone of the losses entailed by a strike is not strong enough to compel their masters to grant the terms which the men insist upon as their due. The men strike because the masters are not sufficiently afraid of loss to be willing to grant demands which they think intolerable. Twelve strikes on an average occur each year, we are told by the secretary himself, Mr Applegarth, in the case of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners. Twelve times, then, in each year, the fear of a strike, in this single trade, is not powerful enough to

prevent the masters from incurring the risks and dangers of resistance. And on which side does the probability lie of being right as to the wages which the business can afford? It is the masters who buy the raw material, and who sell the manufactured produce, and consequently are acquainted with the true state of the market. On the side of the labourers there is little more than a dogged determination to fight for whatever may be got. "It appears in evidence," says the Report of the Royal Commissioners, "that in many cases leaders of Unions fail to consider whether the circumstances of the trade are such as to call for or admit of a rise of wages. It is with them rather a question of the relative strength of the two parties." It is a contest between men who possess information and men who possess none; between those who can assign a reason for their conduct, and those who refuse to listen to any reason, but try to discover by an appeal to brute force, at the cost of much suffering and loss to themselves, whether there is a reason or not. But, replies Mr Applegarth, at any rate the system is successful; "our men agitate in a very businesslike manner, and the result has been that they have got their hours reduced and the wages increased." Twelve strikes a-year—a strike a-month—do not tell of any definite result being acquired at all. The battle is ever renewed; it cannot be said, then, that a very permanent victory is won. Wages still alter, and still the appeal is not to a study of the condition of the trade, but to a trial of loss and suffering; and it is certain that many of these appeals end in failure, and the misery endured has been wasted without result. The incessant recurrence of strikes, by itself alone, demonstrates the capriciousness and recklessness of such a method of proceeding. And what do these strikes substantially impute to the masters? An amount of folly, ignorance, and

perverseness, inconsistent with rational beings. They imply that men who are well informed as to the actual position of the business, from pure selfishness and avarice, refuse to their workmen wages which they can afford, and, consequently, which are due, and prefer incessant fighting, with infinite injury to themselves, to granting those reasonable terms which Mr Applegarth boasts that the Unions ultimately extort. That men who form no reasonable estimate of what wages ought to be, and whose one simple plan is to try by fighting how much they can get, should rush into strikes is intelligible; but that men who understand the situation, and can compute the cost of manufacture and the probable price of sale, should conspire to withhold what they know to be due, and encounter, for the chance of securing an unjust profit, twelve strikes a-year, is utterly beyond comprehension. And then the vastness of the conspiracy which it is assumed the masters have formed—a permanent conspiracy, lasting month after month, year after year—not to do what is right, and so to defraud their workmen. The masters are a class of individuals placed in every variety of position: is it conceivable that all should hold out in this nefarious plot against the constant loss inflicted by strikes; that none should fall away into ways of rectitude; none feel, if not the call of humanity, at any rate the promptings of self-interest; none prefer the granting to the labourers that share of the produce which truly belongs to them, to the losses and the chances of a gamble for unjust gain?

Still, it may be replied, the masters may not be gamblers or conspirators; but they are men; and it is in human nature that they should be slow to raise wages when trade is on the rise, and quick to reduce when orders are slack and prices are giving way. How can individual labourers assert their

rights against such a tendency? What can give the strength which they are legitimately entitled to but some kind of association with each other, so as to secure joint action? If the Union is so ignorant of the true rate at which, under the given circumstances, wages should be paid, and its action is little better than blind hazard, it still remains equally true that the labourer, under that ignorance, can never know whether the master is not taking an unfair advantage of him. There is reason in this reply. We do think that the workman needs help to obtain an equitable bargain. But then this does not at once justify Unionism. It only raises the question, whether those Unions are the best machinery that he can employ for this purpose? But even without any assistance from combination, he does not stand alone and unprotected. When trade is brisk he easily perceives the desire of the masters to procure good workmen. There is no difficulty in his making good his claim to better wages. When the market assumes a falling aspect, the position is still secure. There are real guarantees for justice, though they may sometimes be somewhat slow in their operation. If wages fall below the rate which the business can really afford, competition will certainly spring up amongst the masters. Some of them will seek to attract the superior workmen into their service, by a rate of wages above the level to which the labour-market has unduly sunk; and the law of human life and human action would be violated if a demand existed for a commodity at a price higher than that assigned to it by an arbitrary decree, whether expressed or understood, and the commodity be unable to fetch its real value. Nothing but a monopoly, sustained by force, could prevent the rise; and manifestly no such monopoly can be maintained by masters under the free air of competition. An unjust

depression cannot last long. The waters which have ebbed away too fast will be rolled back by a natural force. The workman who can furnish labour of a higher value will not be long in recovering his right. And if redress is certain—but yet that implies a moderate period of delay—the question resolves itself into a comparison between the amount of loss occasioned by this delay and the amount of the cost involved in Trade-Unions and strikes. It seems to us inconceivable that any sane person should doubt the result of the comparison. Trade-Unions, tried by the test of the expenditure they entail contrasted with the gain they accomplish, can receive no other judgment than condemnation. If no other consideration came to their aid beyond the gain of time which they occasionally effect in establishing the true rate of wages in the labour-market, they would long ago have ceased to exist.

There is an additional and perilous foundation on which Unions sustain themselves in the particular question which we are now discussing—the position of the labourer in bargaining for the determination of the right rate of wages. It is one of feeling. The labourers are profoundly conscious that they do not know whether the masters are justified in lowering the rate; distrust springs up in their inmost hearts; for is it not one of the parties to the bargain who settles its terms without consultation with the other? and is it not in human nature that large masses of men, whose fortunes are thus affected by the action of a few, should resent this uncertainty, and feel themselves irresistibly impelled to seek to learn the true state of the market by actual experiment? The proof may be rough and costly, still it satisfies natural feeling; and unless some satisfaction is given to such a sentiment, Unions will be unassailable by law or reason.

Here we encounter an element in English trade which has received

little, if indeed any, notice from political economists, although it exercises an enormous influence in aiding this painful and injurious uncertainty respecting the right rate of wages. England manufactures for the whole world. Every nation is a customer at her shops and warehouses. Her goods are bought by all countries: she is the shop to which most nations resort for the supply of a large portion of their wants. As a manufacturer and a shopkeeper, England falls under the laws which govern every kind of business. She depends on the power of buying which her customers may possess: she shares their fortunes. If adversity befall them, they buy little of her goods; if their means increase, she finds a larger and readier sale for her wares. Every event which acts upon their wealth rebounds upon her trade. Thus when civil war consumed the capital of America, and her cotton-fields ceased to be cultivated, the power of America—one of her very best customers—to buy in English markets was fearfully reduced; and, still worse, the loss of the raw material dealt a calamitous blow to English trade all over the world. No great war can be carried on without affecting the fortunes of the universal shopkeeper, for war destroys wealth, and with diminished riches come diminished purchases of English merchandise. A bad harvest in a distant region may weigh on English commerce as heavily as a wet autumn at home. The protectionist tariff of America, that evil offspring of the civil strife, tells severely on English factories; it lessens the production of wealth in both countries. There are fewer products of industry created, and there is less to enjoy on both sides. No great act of commercial legislation can well be carried out in any country without being sensibly felt in England, for better or for worse. The adoption of free-trade by a distant State may stimulate the looms of Manchester; the backsliding of

a colony into protection may carry stagnation and ruin to Birmingham. English trade is essentially trade exposed to endless vicissitudes of mind, politics, and weather, on every part of the globe's surface. England cannot be the workshop of all nations without sharing their fortunes.

It is easy to perceive the direct and gigantic influence which the peculiarities of this position exercise over the briskness or flatness of English trade, and the wages which it can afford to labour. In one year large profits and high wages may be realised with ease, amidst the universal satisfaction of the whole population; in another, from causes entirely beyond the control of either capitalist or labourer, factories may be brought to working at reduced time, or to ceasing at others, and wages may go down, to the great distress of innocent multitudes. But the sting of this situation lies in its uncertainty; and it is hard to overrate the mischief which springs from this source. No calculation can be made with confidence as to the continuance of the demand in almost any large department of business. Fluctuations, the most unforeseen and the most violent, may spring up without notice in every market. The manufacturer who has built a new mill may find on its completion that demand has slackened, or the raw material has become inaccessible, or prices have given way below the margin of profit; the workman who has fitted out his house and married a wife may discover that he has involved himself in all the consequences of imprudence. Thus a sense of insecurity diffuses itself throughout the whole community. No one feels safe; all are uneasy at what the morrow may bring; all look out for some protection that shall give stability to their fortunes. The absence of the means of judging the true nature of the situation greatly aggravates its evils. The master counts

up his estimate of the causes that are at work, and reduces wages; the workman is incapable of ascertaining whether his estimate is correct or hasty, and he looks with profound distrust on a measure which seems to protect the master at his own expense. This uncertainty is most pernicious in its relation to the great problem of adapting the numbers of the population to a high standard of comfort. It leaves the labourers without data for discovering what prudence allows or forbids. Official documents disclose to us the rapid increase of marriages which follow high prices and high wages; but what if this impulse upwards is only the prelude of collapse?

This movable and undulating surface, this undulating field of English industry, constitutes the foundation on which Trade-Unions are constructed. It is the unsteadiness of the markets, involving a perpetual sliding-scale for wages, which above every other cause gives a reason for existence to Unions, which makes them seem natural, and invests them with a hold on public sympathy. This is the cause which creates the appearance of a necessity for bargaining, which places employer and labourer face to face as antagonists in a contest in which it is impossible to say what right is, and, consequently, which excites the feeling that the man who has hunger in his immediate view is not evenly matched with his opponent. It is not so with trades in which there is a comparative steadiness of demand and prices. There are no Unions for agricultural labourers; no effort, we believe, has been made to form any; and yet agricultural wages have surely and permanently risen. We are assured by Mr Hope that the rise in Scotland amounts to 40 or 50 per cent in recent years. The climate of England, it is true, is uncertain, and the harvests are unequal; yet they are true to a general average, which admits of

being reckoned on with confidence. As a fact, therefore, in this field of labour, population has been able so to adjust itself to the demand for labour as to render a permanent improvement of wages possible.

We grant, then, that this uncertainty of English trade, this obscurity which necessarily arises from the multitude of countries and of varying commercial situations which it covers, furnishes a justification for bargaining. There cannot always be clear proof that a reduction of wages proclaimed by masters is based on a trustworthy knowledge of the real condition of the trade. Some assistance is required by the working classes; but then the question recurs, Is a Trade-Union the machinery best adapted to furnish the help required? It seems to us that this very uncertainty which we have described supplies a strong argument against the employment of such an organisation. The leaders of a Union, who direct its movements, know still less than the masters what are the causes weighing on the prosperity of the trade; they can furnish no security for the bargain being intelligently and reasonably conducted. A trial of strength, experiment by striking, is the only method with which they are acquainted. No one can dispute the excessive expensiveness of such a mode of proceeding. It is not too much to say that the labourers lose more than they gain by its adoption. Then, again, it is a capital point in this great matter that the machinery of Trade-Unions puts vast power in the hands of leaders, who are obviously exposed to severe temptation to direct it to other purposes than mere bargaining. And we address this very important remark, not to the general public, but to the working men themselves. If the funds of the Union are raised and applied to any other end than the enforcement of legitimate wages by bargaining, it is their money which is lost, it is

they who are the sufferers, it is their wives and their children who have to endure the misery. The combativeness which refuses to submit to a diminution of reward which is not seen to be inevitable is very natural and very intelligible; but it is not the less on that account a ruinous folly if it has no foundation of reason. The leaders possess the enjoyment of power; their gain is clear and assured; and they make no corresponding stake which can be forfeited on failure. It behoves the labourers who may be victims, and who certainly make the sacrifice, to consider whether they may not test the fairness of the wages offered to the workers by some process that shall be at once cheap and rational. The courts of arbitration, which have been tried with success in the Potteries, at Nottingham and elsewhere, offer the precise solution of the problem which is to be desired. They are effective if honestly carried out, and they cost nothing. Composed of masters and workmen in equal numbers, they furnish an opportunity for discussing on equal terms a problem of which neither party in general possesses all the elements. The noble manner in which Lancashire bore the sufferings caused by the cotton famine is a striking proof of the grand spirit in which England's workmen can bear ills which their reason has taught them to be unavoidable. Courts of arbitration are peculiarly adapted to convince the labourers of the real truth of the situation; and this common knowledge of the facts by both parties is the only solid and trustworthy guarantee for harmony and peace. Irresponsible leaders of a vast organisation, disposing of large funds, and enjoying the pleasures of authority and command, are very different persons from representatives chosen simply to confer. Reasonable conduct may be expected of the one, the ways of force are natural to the other. But for the successful working of such

courts, two conditions are indispensable. The whole trade, masters and workmen alike, must be thoroughly imbued with a fair and equitable spirit; and, secondly, the labourers must have imbued themselves with the great economical truth, that it is not within the compass of their power to fix an arbitrary rate of wages—to procure at pleasure, under the fluctuating circumstances of English trade, “a fair day's wages for a fair day's work.” When prices have given way, or demand is slack, or raw materials have become scarce and more difficult to obtain, to insist on a particular rate of wages as the natural due of the workman, is simply to eat up the capital and fortunes of the master. No bargaining can avert the inevitable removal of his wealth from industry by the capitalist, and the consequent ruin of the workman. He will not receive the wages that he desires; for wealth will cease to be produced, and there will be no fund from which he can procure them.

But, reply Trade-Unions, we do not stand solely on the need which the workmen have for help in bargaining for wages with their masters; we admit that the problem is complex, and must be met by the application of wider principles. We take up economical ground, we assert economical doctrine, and our institutions carry out economical principles by rules which aim at the permanent improvement of the condition of the working classes. This language brings us to the second division of our subject. In our first we have laid before our readers the general principles of the relation which wages bear to capital; we have stated the fundamental laws which govern this relation. We have shown that there are forces at work which require controlling, natural powers which must be regulated by knowledge, intelligence, and self-denial. In this great and universal struggle, the methods by

which the combat must be carried on are very diverse; and it is of the utmost importance that those only should be employed which will bear the scrutiny of sound and severe science. The Trade-Unions profess to stand upon economical science: they allege that they aim at right ends, and that they seek to accomplish them by processes which good political economy will ratify as legitimate and efficient. They have adopted rules for the regulation of the numbers of apprentices, for the use of machinery, for the controlling indi-

vidual exertion, and the subordinating it to a general law. They thus interfere with the personal liberty of the workman, and they contend that the welfare of the whole class is promoted by the interference. We propose, on a future occasion, to test the correctness and policy of these doctrines and proceedings by the standard of political economy. None are more deeply concerned to know than the working classes themselves whether they are sustained or condemned by the impartial judgment of science.

EARL'S DENE.—PART VII.

CHAPTER IV.

THERE was once upon a time a certain philosopher who, by the mere exercise of his will, could die whenever he pleased; could put himself into a state of trance, during which his soul, like all living souls, retained its own individuality, but wandered at large into infinite space and infinite time, where there are no special conditions of life and energy; where there are no parts or atoms, but all things are merged in one vast whole. We realise much the same kind of sensation whenever we enter the great city of all great cities.

In every other place we live. Every other spot of earth has an individuality of its own; and when we are in any other spot than this, we also have ours, consciously felt by ourselves and recognised by those about us. Every other place is a place of traffic, of pleasure, of history, of study, of torpor, or of some one of a hundred other things, as the case may be; and every inhabitant of it is more or less in keeping with its characteristic quality in an understood and appreciated degree—in a word, can feel himself, and feel and be felt by others, so as to have a se-

parate existence from the mass. But London has, of all places in the world, the power of absorbing existences, and of merging them in its own. It is more a city of pleasure even than Paris; more of traffic than New York; more of history than Rome; more of study than Oxford; more of torpor than Denethorp. And it is all this, and the opposite to all this, and a great deal else besides, at one and the same time. No one can possibly feel his own individual existence. On entering the universal city he is lost in the whole, like a rain-drop in the sea; like the soul of Hermetimus in the soul of the universe itself.

Doubtless it is a glorious sensation, even though it may considerably diminish our self-conceit, to quit the small for the great; to exchange our own narrow bodies for the vast body of humanity itself. But it is not quite so glorious a sensation when this vast body, as multiform in its aspects as Proteus himself, chooses to assume to us its most evil guise; when it wears the aspect of infinite hunger and of infinite cold. Then a man would fain still farther imitate the

philosopher in question by recovering once more his separate, his individual life, however narrow and confined it might be, and however miserable; for it is better to feel, if starve one must, that one at least starves as a man, and not as a mere atom of a vast starving machine. It need scarcely be said that Félix was not among those to whom a return to his old life was possible. He had chosen to follow his fate to London; and now he must drain whatever cup he might find there, whether of gold or of gall, and whether he chose or no.

Certainly luck had so far been against him; for his present position could not be called altogether the result of imprudence. Had the theatre not been burned, he with his few wants and solitary manner of existence could have lived on as well, in a pecuniary sense, as he had lived in Paris, and have dreamed of future fame and thought of Angélique as well here as there. As time went on, too, his position would doubtless have improved, for he was really a skilful and promising musician; and if merit seldom "succeeds" by its own force, it seldom altogether fails. But now he was, by the destruction of the house at which he was engaged, entirely thrown out of work; for engagements are by no means so plentiful as those who require them—at least they were not so in those days, whatever the case may be now. Besides, he had of course long since spent the small sum of money that he had brought with him from Paris. He had saved nothing; he had lost his violin; and he had made no friends who could be of any assistance to him.

Of course there were many others worse off than he. He was not burdened with a wife and a dozen children; he was not in feeble health; he was not seventy years old. Surely, he thought to himself that night, as hundreds and thousands of young, healthy, and un-

burdened men have thought before him, there must be some way of getting a living, even if in order to do so he should have to desert his profession for a while; and before he fell asleep, as he did, and soundly, he had come to grieve for his violin, not as for a good instrument, but as for a dear friend; for its own sake, that is, far more than for the daily bread which it represented. None but the artist can tell how dear to the heart that mysterious thing called a musical instrument may be which use and association have endowed with what seems like sympathetic life; with a soul made up of all the fancies and all the passions and all the thoughts with which its strings have trembled since it first was made to speak. But there is consolation in thinking that a not inglorious death has saved what we love from danger of desecration: whatever might prove to be the fate of the master, the soul which his hands had made was safe among the stars. And, now that he was put to it, and with this thought for a consolation, after all, he came to think also, there are many worse hindrances in the way of winning the world's battle than that of having nothing to lose. Must not the man inevitably conquer who has to choose between victory and death? With Angélique true to him, what would he not do? Love and the instinct of self-preservation—the poetry and the prose of life—came to his aid, and filled him with the full courage which is the last thing that a man should lose. Nor did the morning bring about a reaction.

But, alas! courage, youth, health, and independence are not talismans. Even they, united, cannot without external aid obtain employment at a day's notice; nor, very often, for a great many days. And then Félix had disadvantages. He could scarcely speak English, and he had lost the only instrument that he knew how to handle. And so, after three or four days of ineffectual search and

exertion, he began to feel his courage ooze away with his physical strength. Love and fame, indeed! He was fast reaching a condition in which he would forfeit the highest throne in the palace of art, and Angélique to boot, for bread, and yet be neither the worse artist nor the worse lover. "*Omnia vincit amor*," say the poets; but they are wrong, as those who have known what the word hunger really means know well. *Omnia vincit fames*, they should say; only it would not be pretty—and, besides, it would not scan.

After all, to say this is not to prove so guilty of treason to romance as might at first be thought. In these days Love has ceased to hold a monopoly of romantic material. Poverty competes with it on terms which, to say the least of it, are fully equal; even as the story which the winter forest has to tell, which brings no tears indeed, but fills the heart with barren desolation, is to the full as effective as the song of a spring flower. Hunger, as the handmaid of poverty, has a romance of its own—and a terrible one too.

There is a well-known natural impulse that leads men to the scenes of their great disasters as well as to those of their great crimes. Thus it happened that, after having spent the greater part of the next day in aimlessly wandering about the streets, Félix, towards evening, found himself once more in front of the *débris* of the theatre. Nor did he find himself there alone; for the impulse that had brought him thither had brought many of his companions in misfortune to the same spot. He conversed with several of them, and more than once had occasion to regret on their account—though not, as yet, for a moment on his own—that he had refused the charity that had been offered to him last night. The very few shillings that he had still about him were very soon his own no more; and he began to long

for the purse that he had scorned. While talking with one of the most unfortunate of the victims of the fire, and thinking this very thought, he felt a slap upon his shoulder; and on looking round suddenly and rather angrily, saw the easily-remembered form of Barton himself, as fresh from his hearth-rug as a child from its cradle.

"Why, man alive!" said the latter, "do you mean to say you've been standing on this very spot ever since yesterday?"

Félix, wholly unversed in English types, and remembering the incident of the purse, not unnaturally took Barton for some eccentric millionaire. It is true that the man was shabby in appearance; but then there is nothing incompatible in general seediness with millionaireism—rather the other way. If a man is particularly well dressed, it is far more likely that he carries his capital upon his back than when, by carelessness about dress, he implies that he has no need to cultivate personal appearance. So he made him a polite answer, and, in the course of a conversation that followed, took occasion to explain to him the case of his companion. In a trice, Barton's hand was in his pocket, which, it will be remembered, contained just ten guineas besides the contents of Mark Warden's purse. In another second it was as empty as when he left Shoe Lane. The unfortunate scene-shifter stared at the gift, as well he might; but, not having the same scruples as Félix, did not for a moment refuse it. He was about to express his gratitude, when Barton interrupted him.

"Damn you!" he said, fiercely, "if you say a word I'll pitch you among the bricks. Come," he said to Félix—"come and drink. That infernal prig Warden made me mix my liquors last night. A bad habit, that; it makes one so dry in the morning. What shall it be? The customary small beer? Or what do you favour on such occasions?"

I myself always take a hair of the dog." So saying he took Félix by the arm, and led him to a bar close by, to which the fire had brought a considerable increase of custom.

Barton asked for brandy, and made his companion have some also, whether he would or no. Then he had some more. Then he entered into general conversation with the other customers, and treated them liberally, never forgetting himself. At last he put his hand into his pocket in order to pay.

"By the daughters of Danaus!" he said to Félix, "cleaned out again! Just lend me half-a-crown, will you?"

Félix felt in his, also; but he knew beforehand that the search would be vain, and so it proved.

"No good, is it? Never mind. Just step outside; and, when you see me come out, do as I do. Tom—another go."

The barman turned to execute the order; and scarcely had Félix passed the door when Barton dashed out at full speed, calling to him to follow. He did so mechanically, until his new friend, having dodged round several corners, suddenly stopped, and broke into a boisterous laugh.

"Give me your hand," he said; "we're brothers, though you are a Frenchman. I always swear brotherhood with a man whose pockets are empty. Bad policy, no doubt; but I never knew a good fellow yet who hadn't empty pockets, or a man with empty pockets who wasn't a good fellow, in one way or another. I think we gave them a good view of our heels just now. Well, well—it won't hurt them for once; I've paid them many a long score in my time. But I say, old fellow, I am positively cleaned out. My name's Barton,—called Dick Barton by his few friends, and something else Barton, which I won't tell you, by his many enemies—of whom some say he is himself the worst. But that's neither here nor there. What's yours?"

"Félix Crévillé."

"All right. I like to know what a man likes to be called. For the rest, the fewer questions one asks any man the better. Where shall we go now? I feel prodigiously inclined for a steak; but my credit's run dry just now. How are you off for that useful commodity?"

It was lucky for Félix that he was quick at guessing, for Barton's English was not well suited to unpractised foreign ears. "I know no place," he answered.

"I thought every fiddler got tick as a matter of course—as drunk as a fiddler, you know, all over the world; that's because a fiddler can get his liquor for a tune, and can drink all day long if he likes for nothing. But, as you don't know any place, we must use our wits, that's all. One can't stand here for ever. Talking of standing, a good thought! Let's take to the road."

"To the road?" asked Félix, puzzled.

"Yes; cry 'Stand and deliver!'—gentlemen in distress, you know—ha, ha, ha! Claude Duval was your countryman, wasn't he? Any way, Turpin was mine—and a name-sake too, by the way. Which shall it be—Hounslow or the Scrubbs? Any way we shall be safe, whichever way we go. '*Cantabit vacuus coram latrone viator.*'"

Certainly if Félix had at first fancied that he had found a millionaire, he was sufficiently undeceived. But his heart also was apt to warm to an empty pocket; it certainly warmed towards one who had shown himself so free-handed when his pocket had been full.

"I am myself without a sou—without a penny," he said, "and I do not know how to get one. And I must leave my lodging; my landlady will need to be paid. But I have yet a piece of bread in the cupboard, and perhaps part of a sausage——"

"Well, you are a good fellow, though you do call yourself a gentleman! I consent. I'll eat half

your bread and a quarter of your sausage; for needs must when the devil drives. And then, why, we'll go forth and conquer or die, like brothers in arms. What else have you got besides the bread and sausage?"

"Nothing."

"I don't mean to eat, you know. A watch, for instance?"

"No."

"Nor I. Furniture?"

"No."

"Nor I. Books? No! Nor I, bar my old Horace—but that's to be buried with me. But, damn it, man, you must have something. Everybody has something. How many shirts have you?"

Félix stared considerably, and coloured also—for his wardrobe was by no means extensive. "How many shirts?" he repeated.

"Yes, how many shirts—more than one, I mean? Two?"

"I have two."

"*Bene!* One more than I have. Good condition?"

"Nearly new."

"Then, *Optime!* My one is not by any manner of means. What else have you?"

"Some music——"

"Not worth a straw."

"A hat——"

"Not worth two straws. Hats never are. Well?"

"A valise——"

"That'll do!"

"And that's all."

"And your violin? Ah, I forgot. That fire last night was like Mantua—*nimum vicina Cremona*. All right. One valise, one shirt—that'll serve for to-day, with strict management; and hang to-morrow! Where do you live?"

The question was a breach of the etiquette that considerably treats as a sacred mystery the dwelling-place of a man who has confessed himself to be without what is even more necessary than a dwelling-place. But Félix answered it.

"Come, then. Let us first consume the bread and sausage. What

luxury! to keep two whole shirts all at once. Lead on. I am devilishly ready for that bread and sausage. Well, well, such is life; grilled bones and port last night, to-day a mouthful of sausage and—porter. Positive yesterday, comparative to-day, perhaps to-morrow superlative—who knows? Any way, I suppose that at least the comparative goes, as you say in France, *song dire?*"

"I am afraid it does not, though. I have shown you the limit of my hospitality."

"Then a mouthful of sausage and thirst. For your noblest element, as some philosophic ass called it, I have a certain dislike that I cannot overcome; or rather, I have such reverence for it that I would put it to no such profane use as that of drinking. I shall die, sir, as my grandfather before me."

"And how was that?"

"Sir, my grandfather was an honest north-country farmer, who entertained that reverence for water which I inherit. I may say, in passing, that I inherit nothing else, except the name of Barton. He was a fine old fellow. I was not born in Lilliput, as you see; but he would have beaten me by a head and neck. One evening, after market-day, he was thrown, or possibly he fell without being thrown, from his horse upon the road, face downward. He was perfectly conscious, however, and found that his face had fallen upon a rut, in which lay two tablespoonfuls of yesterday's rain—just enough, in fact, and no more, to cover his lips and his nostrils. Sir, in order to breathe as freely as you or I, he had only to suck up that water and swallow it—it would not have been more than half a mouthful. But no. 'Not a drop of water have I drunk these sixty years,' he says to himself, 'and I won't bring shame on my grey hairs by beginning now.' Sir, the consequence was that he was literally drowned in those two tablespoonfuls of water,

a martyr to principle. I hope I shall not choke myself with your sausage; but if I do, may I not prove unworthy of my descent from my great ancestor. And so—but here we are."

After having disposed of the contents of the cupboard, Barton took the valise and the shirt to the

nearest pawnbrokers. Presently he returned, threw down a shilling or two upon the table, and then, by their side, set two bottles of brandy that he had procured with the remainder of the few shillings that he had raised.

"And now," he said, "we'll make a night of it!"

CHAPTER V.

It was in company with this strange specimen of a tribe of Bohemia with which Parisian experience had not brought him in contact, that Félix was introduced to those extreme depths to which allusion was made in the last chapter. That men do somehow manage to exist in those depths without actually drowning is certain; but how they do it is a mystery even to themselves. At one time they only had one coat between them, so that when one had occasion to go out, the other had to stay at home. For income, Félix managed to earn a few shillings from time to time by copying music, and Barton displayed great genius in the borrowing of half-crowns; but then the latter were generally absorbed by brandy before they reached the common purse. At last even this unsatisfactory method of supply came to an end; for the world will not keep on lending half-crowns for ever. The most intimate friendship will not stand it; and Barton was not a man who made intimate friends. And then the brandy began to run dry also; and then Barton, having slept through three miserable days, without eating or speaking, woke up, and said—

"I say, old fellow, this will never do. I've stayed with you because I liked you, and because you offered to share your last bite with me, and because I thought I could help you up again; and here have I been knocking under to this damned liquor, as usual. It won't do, and shan't. You're a damned good

fellow, and I'm a beast—that's the fact. So I've been thinking what could be done. I thought I might go back to Cambridge, and take pupils—I don't suppose they've forgotten my iambics there yet. But then I know I should infallibly come to grief there again, just as I did before; and, upon my soul! I don't think I could stand the place now, any more than the place could stand me then. So then I thought of literature. I've done a little in that line already; and I know I could do well enough if I could only stick to work. So let me have the coat this morning, old fellow. I'll go and call upon a man I know at the 'Trumpet,' and one or two places. I must get hold of a nip of brandy somehow, just to screw me up to my day's work, or else I shouldn't be able to say a word to any one; but, bar that, I swear I won't touch a drop for another three days—unless it's absolutely necessary, as it is now."

In this way did he talk when he was sober. But as soon as he did get some work from the 'Trumpet,' and had been paid for it, not another stroke of work would he do till the coin was spent, and he had slept himself sober again.

But editors and publishers, used as they were to this kind of thing in the good old Grub Street days, still could not be expected to stand it any more than other employers of labour when it prevented the labour being done. Barton's work was admirable, and even excellent; but he soon began to find that less and

less was required of him, until at last he found himself once more on his last legs, and once more with nothing to drink.

Félix meanwhile toiled like a slave, and sought for toil like a free man. But though the want of energy and self-command, which in Barton amounted almost to a disease for which he could not be held responsible, are doomed to fail, it does not follow that sobriety and industry, and willingness both to find work and to do it, are doomed to succeed. Félix was overwhelmed by the destiny that had mated him with such a companion. Why, then, in the name of that destiny, did he not free himself from the burden of one who had no claim upon him, any more than he upon Barton? They were a strange pair to find themselves in this situation together. It is true that both were Bohemians—but this was the only similarity; and Bohemianism is not a quality that makes all who profess it necessarily brothers. And yet these two, diametrically opposite as were their characters and circumstances, in all respects save one, had now been living together for weeks as though they had been far more than brothers—that is to say, as though they had been friends. At first, no doubt, Félix had been to a certain extent passive in the matter, and had rather submitted to than sought the companionship of a man whom he could not in the least understand. It was not likely that the French musician, who knew nothing of the world save its artistic side, and that in an un-English fashion, could comprehend, far less appreciate, one to whom the artistic side of the world was wholly non-existent; who classed all musicians under the generic title, which he always used contemptuously, of "Fiddlers;" whose whole soul seemed to be absorbed in Greek, of which his companion had no knowledge—and in getting brutally drunk, with which he had no sympathy. Still he not only

endured this comradeship, but could not help feeling a sort of real affection for the comrade in his difficulties whom chance had given him. Besides, every man has his follies; and Félix, most assuredly, had great ones. For instance, he knew perfectly well that, had Dick Barton actually been the millionaire for whom he had at first taken him, as many of the million pounds as he pleased would have been his own; and that the same would have been the case had it been a question of sharing, not a million pounds, but two farthings. So he committed the folly of taking the will for the deed. Again, it was part of his Bohemian gospel that a man is quite justified in turning his back upon a prosperous friend, but that to desert even a chance comrade when he is down in the world is as base a thing as a man can well do. So he committed the wild folly of standing by Dick Barton, as he felt sure that Dick Barton stood by him in point of goodwill. And so it was that he had, in effect, to strive his best to make work, which was insufficient to support one, support two—if, indeed, Barton can be held to count for no more than one. As for Barton's motives, who can or need ascribe motives good or bad to such a man? And, after all, far stranger relations between men spring up than this—not, perhaps, in respectable society, where they associate according to form and rule, but certainly in that vague and ill-defined outside world in which they go against form and rule by preference.

But still, bravely as Félix toiled, and bravely as Barton talked of toiling, it was not long before the two friends fell into so deplorable a condition, that a day or two at most must inevitably see them numbered among the lodgers of the *hôtel à la belle étoile*.

"I say, old fellow, this will never do," said Barton once more, as he instinctively reached out his hand to where the bottle of brandy ought

—or rather ought not—to have been.

Félix looked up from his copying. Assuredly no one could have recognized in the worn face, with its pale colour, sunken cheeks, and dim eyes, the development either of the peasant of the Jura or of the Parisian art-student. His coming to London had proved a wild-goose chase indeed, and something worse.

"The London press is in the hands of idiots," Barton went on. "I could conduct it all single-handed ten times as well as it is conducted now; and they know it. And yet they won't throw me enough work to keep body and soul together. The fact is, I'm too good for them. I should rout out their damned cliques, and frighten the fools out of whatever they have in the place of their wits. The fact is, a man should never be quite so clever as his employers, and I'm a long stretch cleverer than mine. Upon my soul, I think I shall enlist; and if I get run through or knocked on the head by one of your damned Frenchmen—why, so much the better for Dick Barton. 'Here lies Dick Barton, who never did anything because he did everything too well—*Nepioi, oude isasin hoson pleon hemisu pantos*;' that'll do for an epitaph. By the way, I've got to go to the theatre to-night."

"The theatre?"

"Yes—for the Trumpet. 'To such base uses may we come at last!' I, who have criticised Sophocles, am now to criticise Jones!"

"What is the play?"

"Hell knows. Something musical—that's all I know. But I've got the bill somewhere."

"Musical—and they send you?"

"That's the very reason, I suppose. If it had been a new edition of Sophocles they'd have sent it to you. But, after all, what does it matter? A tune's a tune, and a song's a song, I suppose."

"Not quite, I should say."

"Well, I confess I never saw any

difference between one tune and another. But it can only be asses that read musical criticisms; and it's easy enough to tickle their long ears somehow, so that they mayn't find out one's ignorance. That's my whole theory of the matter."

"And a very detestable one too."

"Not at all. Cast not your pearls before swine, as somebody or other says somewhere. But it's time I was off. Where's the coat?—oh, blast it!"

No wonder that he began to swear, for the coat, which had once been the undivided property of Félix, required the most tender and delicate handling to adapt itself to the big frame of Barton; and now, with a sudden cry, as it were, it split from tail to collar, and became an undivided coat, in any sense, no more.

Barton first looked ruefully at the result of his attempt, and then burst into a loud laugh. The misfortune was serious, but was not, at the same time, without its comic element.

"There!" he went on; "what in the devil's name is to be done now? One can't get mine out of pawn to-night, that's certain—nor to-morrow, unless I write this review. I know—give me one of those pens, and a scrap of your paper. The music-paper will do—it'll look all the better. I'll give you another lesson in the art of criticism."

He placed the play-bill before him and began to write with his usual rapidity.

"There," he said at the end of about half an hour, during which Félix had been wearily proceeding with his copying—"There, I think that'll do for the swine. Just see that I haven't made any technical blunders, or called anything by a wrong name."

So Félix read, "'—*Theatre*. Last night this house re-opened under the able and enterprising management of Mr Green—'"

"A manager is always able and

enterprising," interrupted Barton, "just as a critic is always able and impartial. That's only common form business. Go on."

"For performances in which the highest class of music is to hold a distinguished place."

"That's a quotation from the bill. Go on."

"With this view we are glad to find that he has engaged the services of that eminent Parisian composer, Monsieur Louis Prosper"—*Grand Dieu! Prosper! Est-il possible?*" And Félix leaped suddenly from his seat.

"Why, what's wrong?" asked Barton. "It's all out of the bill, so far."

"Wrong? On the contrary it is all right! Here—give me the coat—fasten it together anyhow

—I go to the theatre instead of you."

"What—and write the review?"

"Bah! Never mind the review; that'll keep now. You may be an 'able and impartial critic;' but you touch not that which regards Louis Prosper."

"What—is he a friend of yours? Is he good for half-a-crown?"

"For something better, I hope, than your half-a-crown!"

And so, from his bare and miserable garret, without a shirt to his back, which was covered only by the rags of what had once been a coat, but which now consisted of little more than rents and pins, the Marquis de Croisville went forth to apply for aid to the Jew fiddler, who was at that moment ruling his orchestra with a jewelled hand.

CHAPTER VI.

Neither, therefore, of the lovers of Mademoiselle Angélique Lefort was just now in a flourishing condition, inasmuch as one was within an ace of starvation, and the other had a bullet in his body, at about as inconvenient a season as can well be imagined.

Mr Prescott, Lieutenant Mountain, Captain Seward, and the surgeon himself, who had acquired considerable experience of gunshot wounds, not only in the Peninsula and the Low Countries, but in such more accessible and scarcely less instructive places as Chalk Farm and Wormwood Scrubbs, were unanimous in thinking that Hugh Lester would never open his eyes again.

Those were not the days when mere bare human life, even if bought at the price of honour, was considered among those who did regard honour as being of any very great value in itself; and had such an opinion yet acquired its full force, none of these four, who had seen death in many forms, would have necessarily been much, if at

all, affected by the sight of one dead body the more. Not one of them would have refused to risk his own life in a similar encounter a hundred times if necessary. Prescott had killed his man at least once before; and the other three had seen death wholesale, in the hospital and in the field. Not one was in the least likely to be troubled with morbid misgivings about the termination of any meeting between gentlemen, however lamentable it might be. But, nevertheless, not one felt very much at ease with himself just now. It was not good to see this young man, who but a minute ago had been full of health and high spirit, with a long and prosperous and, to all appearance, happy life before him, suddenly sent out of the world for having been guilty of an excess of chivalry. Remorse is of course too strong a word; but certainly Mr Prescott did feel that his satisfaction had been unsatisfactory. He would not indeed have retired from the contest even in order to recall his opponent to life, for to give up a

contest was not in his nature ; but he would willingly have paid a great many thousand pounds, and, as men go, it is something to be willing to do even so much ; and, if one has the great many thousand pounds to give, the will to give them is a great deal more than something.

In fact, he did what he could by accompanying the unconscious form of his late opponent to the public-house which was not far off, and where it was laid upon a bed until it should be removed to Earl's Dene. Then he went away with Lieutenant Mountain ; for, though he had no serious consequences to apprehend for himself, it was still necessary that he should at least leave the immediate neighbourhood for the present.

It was of course upon Captain Seward that devolved the most difficult duty of all—that of telling Miss Clare that she was now childless indeed. He would rather have been the principal in any number of duels ; but it had to be done ; and besides, he had in his keeping those last five letters of his own principal, of which one was for her. So he drove himself, not too quickly, back to Earl's Dene, and asked to see Miss Clare privately.

In all the world there is no more formidable task than to have to tell a woman of the unexpected death of one whom she loves. At all events Captain Seward thought so now ; for he had never seen Miss Clare before, and did not know how she took things—that is to say, whether she would faint or scream, or merely burst into tears.

"Miss Clare," he said, with as much sympathy as he could manage, "I am Captain Seward of the —th—at Redchester, you know. Could you prepare yourself for news—you know—most painful—in fact—if you could—it would be better."

She bowed, as a sign that she was ready to hear it, whatever it might prove to be.

The gallant Captain began to stammer again. At last,

"Damn it, madam," he burst out ; "my friend, Hugh Lester—there has been a meeting—and——"

Miss Clare neither fainted nor screamed nor burst into tears.

"You mean a duel?" she only asked, though in a fever of fear.

"It couldn't be helped, indeed, I assure you. I did my best—as his friend you know—but——"

Miss Clare suddenly stepped forward, and grasped the mantelpiece, partly to support herself—partly because her hands needed to clutch something.

"And he is dead!" she said.

Seward remained silent, and only hung down his head. Thus he did not see that violent grasp of the hand, nor the trembling of the lines of the mouth, which belied the hard coldness of the words which he heard.

"I need not ask if he was in the right, or how he behaved," she continued in the same strange tone, after a pause.

"Admirably."

"Then——"

She said no more, but only showed by a slight gesture that she wished to be alone.

"What a monster of a woman!" thought Captain Seward to himself as, having silently laid the letter upon the table before her, he left the room and the house. But he was wrong, as he would have owned could he have read her heart. It is the calm and stern woman who is to be pitied when a sudden blow falls upon her far more than her who is able to find relief in hysterics. Unfortunately, however, this is not the order in which compassion is bestowed ; and men forget that the fullest heart is always the last to overflow.

"Am I never to expiate my sin?" she thought bitterly. "Am I ever to prove a curse to those whom I love most?—and Hugh——"

Then she did break down ; and

Captain Seward would have called her monster no more. But she was one who would have died rather than shed a tear in the sight of a stranger. Reserve with her was both a habit and an instinct, even in grief; which is often the case with those whose pride is genuine, and not mere affectation. It is terribly pathetic, this proud modesty of soul, which is ashamed even in the sight of sympathy.

Of course the ill news had reached Earl's Dene of itself as soon as, if not before, it had been brought officially by Captain Seward. The external coldness of Madam Clare was certainly not imitated either by her guest or by her household. On the contrary, the one, without giving herself time to think or to realise, rushed to the side of her hostess, and the others into the wildest confusion. The kitchen amply made up, in the matter of hysterics, for what was wanting in the drawing-room. But Miss Raymond's impulse to console her friend was balked. Madam Clare was invisible even to her. She was reading the letter that Hugh had addressed to her before he fell.

It was a dreadful revelation to her, from which not even her infinite sorrow could take away the bitterness of disappointment; and when she learned, as the reader will have guessed, that her nephew was still living, her infinite joy was unable to make her forget what she had felt in her sorrow.

And so it was for this that she had toiled and taken much thought, and done her duty in her station, and made friends and foes, and fought hard, and spent the wealth of her affection, which was none the less plentiful, because the treasure-house was old—for this, that the glory of Earl's Dene should pass into the hands of a girl little above the rank of a servant, who intended to go upon the stage, and who was a Frenchwoman and a Papist to boot! She was quite as preju-

diced now as she had been in her rather wild youth: it was only the direction of her prejudices that was changed. And then, too, she was unconsciously put out by finding that the penetration of which she was so proud had been at fault all along; that she had been suspecting Marie, while the true enemy had been Angélique. But worst of all was the feeling that Hugh himself had deceived her in the matter.

It was not that, like some mothers, she foolishly and vainly grieved at finding out that she held only the second place in her son's affection. She was much too wise and sensible for that. On the contrary, she wished to see him married before she died, and she wished him to choose one whom he could love. But then she was much too fond of managing everything and everybody, not to wish to manage that most important matter with her own hands. If Hugh had only seen fit to fall in love with the heiress of New Court, she would have been more than satisfied; and this for several reasons, one of which was altogether new.

An election in those days was not a cheap amusement. No one except Mr White and Madam Clare had the least idea of what had to be spent upon the contest for Dene-thorp. Of course it had been the policy of the Yellows to make it a battle of purses, seeing that that of their champion was on the whole the best supplied; and Miss Clare's, though long, was not inexhaustible. Her unencumbered estate had for the first time to learn what is meant by a mortgage; and the thought vexed Miss Clare's soul, who had set her heart upon leaving it to her heir in as free a condition as she had herself received it. Now New Court "marched" with Earl's Dene. Even had the owner of the former not personally been an eligible match, the two properties seemed made to be married; and how could the pecuniary wounds re-

ceived during the contest be more satisfactorily cured?

So much for the state of Miss Clare's mind during the weary time that passed while Hugh lay in the delirium of the fever caused by his wound, and utterly incapable of taking the least interest in what was going on among either his friends or his foes. Of course Miss Raymond quitted Earl's Dene as soon as possible, and carried off her companion with her, who left Denethorp willingly. Nothing more could be done there now; and, should Hugh finally recover, the letter that had been delivered to her by Captain Seward would prove by no means a bad card in the game that she was playing with Fortune and Miss Clare.

Meanwhile, in spite of Hugh's condition, his friends by no means slackened their exertions in his behalf. On the contrary, they worked all the harder for their wounded chief, out of whose bullet they coined plenty of telling points. Of course, Warden now came to the front more than ever, if possible; and at last, when the day came, to the surprise of none but to the frantic disappointment of many, the poll closed with an undoubted majority in favour of Mr Lester. Thanks mainly to the doctor's son, Earl's Dene had held its own.

But still it was a tame and unexciting end to that long and exciting canvass. Neither candidate was present to make his final speech: to chair the conqueror in his present state was of course out of the question: and the beauty, fashion, and royalty of Earl's Dene put in no appearance. Mark Warden from the balcony of the King's Head had to receive on the part of his friend both the cheers of the Blues and the rotten eggs of the Yellows.

Now, it will doubtless be remembered that the partisans of the latter colour formed the strongest mob, and that they included the

mill-hands almost to a man. Under a system of universal suffrage Prescott would have been returned triumphantly. It may, therefore, be readily imagined that, although Mark Warden represented the victor, the rotten eggs were far more plentiful than the cheers, seeing that the losing was the popular side. Had Hugh Lester been able to show himself, and had Alice Raymond been there to fill the market-place with the glory of her smile and of her blue ribbons, and had Madam Clare had the good sense not to accompany her, the Yellows would, in all probability, have taken their beating pretty well; for they liked Hugh personally, and the smile of a pretty girl has its influence even with a mob. But as things stood, smarting as they were under the sting of defeat, deprived of any ordinary way of letting off their rage, and with no spectacle of triumph to amuse them, the beer with which they were filled to repletion turned sour, and things began to look ill for the peace of the town.

But an English mob is slow to ferment. So long as Mark Warden was endeavouring from the balcony to thank the electors of Denethorp in the name of his friend Mr Lester for having stood so well by Church and State, and to congratulate the town generally upon its new representative, his hearers contented themselves with drowning his voice in a torrent of groans for himself, for Lester, and, above all, for Madam Clare, and of cheers for Prescott, and by assiduously pelting him with eggs, potatoes, and the other missiles in use on such occasions, till he was obliged to make a final bow and retire. But, when this little piece of vengeance was over and there was nothing external to itself to engage its attention, the crowd was thrown upon its own resources.

It is rather a strong remark to make about anything, seeing how many hideous things there are in

the world ; but still, on the whole, it may fairly be said that the most hideous of all is an angry mob. It is literally a thing, or rather a monster ; for it ceases to be made up of men with distinct personalities of their own. Even in the dullest and quietest of places an angry mob at once takes the guise of its fellows in the great cities of the world. All are alike—alike in stupidity, in madness and in brutality ; and while an English mob is certainly not worse than those of other countries, it is certainly not better—except in the matter of garlic. Now the Mayor of Denethorp happened to be a man of sense, and, not liking the look of things—for he had heard that the malcontents of Denethorp had been reinforced by some roughs from Redchester and by some more dangerous roughs from B—— itself who had scented carrion from afar, with the strange instinct of their kind—he sent an express to the Redchester barracks to ask for the loan of a troop of dragoons for the night, and then went home to entertain some of the leading conservatives at a dinner of triumph and congratulation. Mark Warden did not remain to enjoy his hospitality, however, but hurried off at once to Earl's Dene. By degrees all the respectable inhabitants of the place had left the streets ; and the worse portion of the crowd was left to itself.

After a few drunken fights had taken place, a few black eyes been given, and a few of those who dared to wear the colours of victory knocked down and well kicked and trampled upon, the signal for mischief was given by a very small boy, who, for mere fun, threw a stone through one of the windows in the front of the King's Head. In another minute the inn had not a window left unbroken. After this glorious achievement the mob, with a cheer of triumph, marched into the High Street, and performed the same operation upon the shops and

houses at first of those who were known to be Tories, and afterwards indiscriminately. At the end of the High Street it turned to the left, and soon afterwards, finding itself in front of Mr Warden's house, repeated the performance upon its windows also, including that which Lorry had at last remembered to have mended only the very day before. The brass plate was of course torn off, and far greater damage would, in all probability, have been done, had not some one in the crowd suddenly cried out,

"To Market Street ! Let's knock up Lester's French drab !"

It was a suggestion exactly calculated to charm a mob already heated with easy triumphs. To attack a young girl and a weak old man is exactly the sport in which such a Hydra revels, when its blood is well up. With an evil shout and a final discharge at the house of the surgeon, who was dining with the mayor while poor Lorry was trembling in the coal-hole, the crowd turned, and almost ran to Market Street.

"Twenty-three !" called out a dozen of its voices, and it stopped.

But the hospitality of the mayor had by this time been broken into by the news of what was going on in the town. He was by no means a man of commanding presence, nor did he possess too much courage ; but no one could say of him afterwards, as has sometimes been said of mayors on similar occasions, that he did not at all events try to do his duty like a man. He had already sent a second express to Redchester, to hurry the dragoons ; and now, attended by many of his guests, he gained the window of a house opposite to No. 23 by entering through the back-door, and attempted to make himself heard.

But it was not likely that he should succeed in doing what Mark Warden had failed to do. His second word was drowned by a

yell, and by a crash of stones upon the house of the bootmaker who was so unfortunate as to have the Leforts for lodgers. The situation was so dangerous that the mayor retired from his exposed position, and small blame to him.

But Monsieur Lefort came forward to his own window. Mrs Price had been far more formidable to this French gentleman than all the *canaille* of the town could possibly be. He turned very pale, indeed; but it was because of the insulting shouts that reached Marie's ears as well as his own. Having sent his daughter, who, brave as she was, was certainly not too brave to tremble, with the two children into a back room, he went straight to the window and displayed to the crowd below the barrel of some ancient weapon of the blunderbuss order.

As an answer to this piece of bravado went up a roar, half of anger, half of laughter; and then a stone went up also, sufficiently well aimed to hit the old Frenchman on the shoulder.

The sting of the stone roused up the spirit of combat in him who felt it. Hitherto he had been a gentleman defying *canaille*, and a father defending his children; but now he was a Frenchman who had received a blow. He retired at once from the window, but it was only to fill his weapon with powder and ball.

"Let's rout out the lot of 'em!" cried some one.

The mob answered with a confused burlesque of the shouts of the hunting field, and a charge was made at the street-door of the house, which, barred and bolted as it was, could not resist the rush for long. In a minute or two it gave way, and the two or three men who were immediately pressing against it were sent flying into the entrance passage, and, in a second, trampled under the feet of their followers. The shop was soon in the wildest disorder, and a few of the invaders, eager for mis-

chief, were beginning to mount the stairs. Marie was on her knees, praying to saints and angels with all her strength; the bootmaker and his wife had followed the example of Lorry.

Suddenly the sound of a shot was heard, and then a cry from the street.

Marie sprang from her knees in wild alarm; and the mob was hushed for an instant into silence. But only for an instant; for in another there went up to the skies such a roar as Denethorp had never heard. Stones flew like hail and at random, many recoiling upon the heads of those who threw them. Meanwhile not a few of the rioters, discontented with this barren mode of attack, rushed into the house itself, and were, little by little, and step by step, forcing those who had already entered it up the stairs. It seemed only a question of time whether the second story itself should be reached; whether Marie's own room should be invaded by this horrible tide.

It was a terrible moment. But, thank heaven, "when bale is next, boot is next"—so it is always. The longing ears of the Mayor were at last gladdened by the sound of the galloping of hoofs upon the hard pavement, and by the ring of steel. In another instant, the end of the street that opened upon the market-place was filled with a welcome vision of shining helmets and scarlet coats and drawn swords.

"Halt!"

The sharp word of command rang through the street, and the coward heart of the Hydra shrank and shrivelled. Captain Seward, who was in command of the troop, leaving his men where they were, rode forward alone through the crowd, as coolly and carelessly as if it had consisted of so much brushwood, towards the house where the Mayor was beckoning to him from the window; and not a man opposed his passage. It is nonsense to say that an English mob has any

peculiar respect for the law. But it has a peculiar fear of the law when reminded of its strength by the sight of a sword or a truncheon; and this goes far to supply the want of respect. Before the officer had reached the door the street was empty.

All was well, then, after all, except for the breaking of glass—and, as his son-in-law was a glazier—

well, it's an ill wind that blows nobody good!

So thought the Mayor, as he shook hands with Captain Seward. But so did not think Marie.

Poor Monsieur Lefort, too proud to leave the window, had been struck on the temple during that last wild storm of stones; and, when she emerged from her own room, she found him dead.

CHAPTER VII.

Hugh's wound had left him in a very feeble state of convalescence, so that he was now just in that condition which a woman, however much of manliness she may have in her character, is likely to fix upon as giving her a good opportunity for bringing a man to task, and in which a man is no match for the weakest of women. For it is impossible to rebel against an affectionate nurse, even were it not a trouble; and, when a Madam Clare is the nurse, and a Hugh Lester the patient, the impossibility is more impossible still.

"Hugh," she said to him two or three days after he had left his bed, "you must have been expecting me to talk to you."

He summoned up all the energy that Mr Prescott and two doctors had left him among them, for he knew what was coming.

"I hope," she went on, "that your illness has given you an opportunity of considering?"

He waited for her to continue.

"At least, if you have not considered, I hope you will now."

"I have considered it," he said.

"I am glad of that. And now we shall understand each other once more."

"Aunt," he answered, "I am afraid you do not understand."

"But you had considered the matter, did you not say?"

"I have," he said gravely—he had become very much graver of

late, independently of his illness—"and—I am not changed."

"What? Is it—can it be still possible——"

"Am I not engaged to her?"

"Engaged! You must be infatuated."

"But what objection——"

"What objection? I wonder you can ask such a question."

"She is a lady."

"No, Hugh—she is not a lady; and, if she were, that has nothing to do with it. I cannot argue such an absurd question."

"My dear aunt——"

"No. I do not call her a lady who has acted as she has done."

"And how has she acted? What has she done?"

"Hugh, your folly goes beyond all bound."

"I will not argue with you, aunt. You do not know her."

"Nor do you, it seems."

"But even if I did not trust her, as I do, and even if I did not—love her, she has my word. And now, too, that she has no friend but me—now that she has lost her only protector, and lost him on my account——"

"Is the successful candidate bound to marry every girl who loses her protector in an election riot? Surely you are talking the wildest folly. You cannot love her—it is impossible. It is a boy's fancy, of which you ought to be ashamed."

"It is no boy's fancy, aunt. And

it is a question of honour, too. I could not give her up, even if I would."

"Oh, Hugh—remember that we are mother and son. If you did but know——"

She took his hand in hers, with a greater show of affection than he had ever witnessed in her. Tenderness is a better weapon of attack than pride; and he was moved.

"My dear aunt—my dearest mother—I do know—I do remember. But I know also that I am doing what is right, and that you will acknowledge that I am doing what is right in the end. You cannot ask me to give up, to break my word to her I love when she is most helpless. In this I cannot obey you, nor could you wish me to. In everything else——"

"Yes," she said, excitedly, "in everything but in what concerns the most important step in your whole life—in everything but just where I require your obedience most! That is not trust—that is not obedience. Hugh, if you persist in this folly of yours, we cannot be as we have always been; and I shall care about nothing any more. If you have a right to choose who shall be your wife, I have a right to choose who shall be my daughter. Decide between her and me. I will speak no more about it now; and I pray that you may see things in a better light."

And so the conversation ended for the present, leaving Miss Clare angry and her nephew exhausted. Neither recurred to the subject for some days; on the contrary, both studiously avoided it. But the truce was hollow, and both alike felt that the great struggle was to come. Miss Clare was perfectly sincere in saying that she would be infinitely distressed by a breach between herself and her nephew: she would have been right had she said that it would have rendered her heart-broken. It would be far better for her that he had died than that they should become estranged.

But to give way was a thing of which she was incapable. She had never given way to anybody in her life; and it was much too late to begin now, whatever distress her obstinacy might cause herself or any one else. Besides, she thought with equal sincerity that it was her bounden duty not to let Hugh and Earl's Dene go to the destruction that she was sure must needs spring from so gross a *mésalliance*.

"Hugh," she accordingly said to him a day or two before he was to leave for London, "I suppose you will be seeing Alice Raymond again before very long?"

"Oh, I shall call there at once, of course. Have you any message for her?"

"I will give you a letter for her. What a dear girl she is! I got quite to look upon her as my other child."

Hugh let this pass, and said nothing.

"She will make an admirable wife—and she is so unspoiled and unaffected. So different from most other girls."

Hugh began to hum a tune mildly.

"Do you not think so, Hugh?"

"I think she is a charming girl indeed, aunt."

"It is not every day that one finds a pretty girl so natural and so amiable—so good. How delightful it would be if you took it into your head to ask her to be my daughter indeed. But perhaps you have taken it into your head already? If so——"

She spoke almost appealingly, and with a forced smile. Hugh felt the weight of her suggestion, in spite of its having been made so wholly without tact; for, as has been said, he felt to the full the influence of all family and social traditions, and it had always been the part of Earl's Dene, like "*Felix Austria*," to increase itself by marriage. But he was now under the influence of something much stronger than family and social tradition.

"But the lady herself might have something to say to that arrangement," he answered, as lightly as he could.

Miss Clare's face brightened a little, with a faint ray of hope.

"Nothing unpleasant," she replied. "I do not fancy that you, at least, would find the lady of New Court very cruel."

He saw that his manner had somehow given her a wrong impression, which it was his duty to correct at once, especially as it was evident that her suggestion had been made seriously and in full earnest.

"Aunt," he said, gravely, "you know that such a thing is quite impossible."

"Indeed I do not know it. Why should it be impossible? You are both nearly of an age, both of nearly equal position—the advantage being yours in both cases—you both have the same tastes, you like each other—why in the world should it be impossible?"

Hugh was silent; but his silence expressed his thought only too well.

"You do not mean, of course," she went on, in a low and constrained voice, "that you are still indulging in any folly about—about her servant?"

"About Miss Lefort, you mean? I do not consider it folly."

Miss Clare was silent in her turn. The inevitable battle was about to begin.

"What you say is impossible," he continued. "I cannot ask Miss Raymond to be my wife. I am not free; and I would not be free even if I could."

"And"—this scornfully—"can you possibly imagine that I should open my arms and receive Miss Lefort as a daughter?"

"I had hoped so—I hope still that you will."

"You have lost your senses. I will not see you acting so madly without doing what I can to prevent it. Earl's Dene shall never come to this girl."

Hugh understood this threat—for it was nothing less than a threat to himself—perfectly well. But he was nothing if not chivalrous. He certainly could not give up Angélique now; and even Miss Clare felt that by her last speech she had managed to put herself in the wrong.

"Aunt, I am indeed sorry that you are so prejudiced against Angélique—against Miss Lefort. But when a man's whole happiness is concerned——"

"That is nonsense. A man's whole happiness does not depend upon such things, although a boy may think so."

"Mine does, however."

"I did not think you were such a slave to your fancies."

"This is not a fancy."

"You are determined, then?"

"Quite."

"Then listen, Hugh." The tears forced themselves into her eyes. "I am not angry with you. Of course I know perfectly well that I have no real right to prevent your marrying a beggar out of the street, or worse; but I have a right to object to know your wife, and to do with Earl's Dene what I please. As long as nothing happens I shall be the same to you as I have always been; but if I hear of your committing this wicked folly, I will see you no more, and the place must go to strangers. No—not to strangers: Alice Raymond shall in any case be mistress of Earl's Dene. It will not be the first time of its going from woman to woman. Now we understand each other, I hope?"

"My dear aunt, let the land go as it will. But let us be friends." He was not eloquent by nature, and he was moved more than he cared to show.

"We cannot, as long as you persist in your folly."

"Then—if it must be so——"

"Say nothing, Hugh. Think quietly of what I say."

"I have thought."

"I cannot think so. I will never mention this subject to you again, and hope never to hear it mentioned. I am not angry, as you see ; but I am quite firm."

So ended the second conversation, in which Miss Clare had certainly proved that tact was anything but her strong point. Nevertheless, her policy had not been undiplomatic. She knew enough of Hugh to know that he was too

honest to let Angélique marry him in ignorance as to his circumstances and prospects, and enough of the world to feel pretty certain that Angélique would not marry him if she was not left in ignorance about them. Her threat had been aimed at Angélique rather than at Hugh ; and she doubted not but that it would at once drive her enemy from the field.

CHAPTER VIII.

It is always as well, at least once in the course of a long story, to take a short retrospect of how things stand, especially when changes are imminent, and when, as in the present case, the process can be managed in very few words.

Angélique, then, was now betrothed to two men at once, neither of whom she could be said to love, in any sense of the word, and from neither of whom could she hope to get much worldly benefit, seeing that her first lover was still only a struggling musician, worse off than he had ever been, and that her second ran a very fair chance of being disinherited for her sake. Hugh Lester, now member for Denethorp, had to choose between Angélique on the one hand, and Earl's Dene on the other, with a very strong bias in favour of the shadow over the substance. Madam Clare had to decide between the loss of her son—for such he may fairly be considered—and the sacrifice of her own nature ; and Mark Warden between love, duty, and honesty on one side, and the success in life which was his idol—that is to say, himself. The unlucky Félix seemed fated to be unhappy ; and Marie—

But Marie is to some extent the heroine of this story, at least *pro tempore* ; and yet, in the course of seven chapters, headed with her name, she has scarcely once appeared.

What in the world was she to do,

with those two poor children dependent upon her, with a bad reputation in the only place that knew her, and with a husband that was no husband ? She could not remain in the town after what had happened, that was certain ; and where was she to go ? Warden could not yet acknowledge her as his wife, for he must then resign his fellowship, and, as it were, own that he had obtained it and kept it on false pretences ; and, besides, he had no other means to help himself, much less her. Nor could she live with him as his mistress, which, for the present, would have been an obvious solution of the difficulty. She would not have done so even had he proposed it to her, as he did not. And even, keeping his fellowship, he could do but very little for her. He *must* manage to get to the bar ; and that he could not do, at the soonest, in less than a long five years—it was not so quick and easy a proceeding as it is now—during which he would have to defray the expenses of his legal education and to support himself as a gentleman. Literature, and such illegitimate aids to the law student, were not in his line ; and he was too practically wise to permit himself to stray from the plain, hard, straightforward style of work which had paid him so well hitherto. He knew that, if he wished to succeed in the profession that he had chosen, he must spend the period of his apprenticeship.

ship in learning it. And so it was plain that, even if he lived with strict economy, he should require in effect the whole of his income for himself. When he had paid a hundred pounds to the special pleader in whose chambers he intended to read, another hundred for his chambers, his furniture, his books and other expenses incidental to his student life, and another hundred—he could not reckon it at less—for his clothes, his food, and his daily expenses, it was plain that it would be absurd to talk of leaving a margin in his three hundred a-year, at least for the present. He might borrow a little money on the strength of his income, it is true; but he would not be able to do so except upon hard terms, and he was much too sensible to eat all his cake at once. And so Marie must needs do something to keep herself until better times should come in the far-off future, to feed, clothe, and educate the children, and to aid Angélique in bringing herself before the world, which would doubtless welcome such transcendent genius with open arms. There, indeed, Miss Raymond would doubtless prove useful; but even Miss Raymond, kind and generous as she was, could not be expected to support a whole family. Monsieur Lefort had left nothing behind him but debts.

And so, after much talk with Warden, who certainly was honestly anxious to do all he could for her from his own point of view, it was decided that she also should pass through the trance of *Hermetismus* and become another drop of water in the great city, in order to attract to herself as many smaller drops in the shape of pupils as possible. Let not her husband, however, be blamed overmuch. The sacrifice of his whole career by a man for a woman's sake is one which no one in the world has a right to expect from another, even if he himself is one who is capable of making it; nor is it by any means certain that

such a sacrifice—romance apart—is one that a man is even justified in making under almost any given circumstances. Whatever is best in the brain and in the arm of a man is not his own to put under the feet of a woman; it belongs to the world; and sacrifice is quite as often the consequence of cowardice and of weakness as of strength or of courage. The whole world was open to Warden now. Great things were expected of him by others, and he felt himself capable of doing great things; and he had just gained the influence of Earl's Dene to help him to do them. All this, all the purposes of his whole heart and life he would have to forfeit by a premature acknowledgment of his marriage, or even by privately treating Marie as his wife; and he would have to commit worse than suicide by settling down into the life of an obscure country parson for the remainder of his days. It does not even follow that he would gain with his parish and his wife the consciousness of having done his duty, or that if he did, such consciousness would afford him the least satisfaction, for conscience is always much more ready to sting than to console. The leopard can change his spots sooner than one like Mark Warden can change his nature; and a life of repose, spent in the fulfilment of uncongenial duty, would, with him, simply mean a life of vain longing and lasting regret. Marriage, once more, is not the life of a man as it is of a woman; and, when a man sacrifices himself and his true life for its sake, it seldom happens that either his life or himself is worth very much.

At the same time, to prevent any misconception, it ought to be added that a sense of duty consecrates all things; and that the higher form of love, or rather of sympathy, which so few can even understand, comprehending as it does all things, is more than worth the sacrifice of them all, and does more than consecrate any act that is com-

mitted in its name. But with these remarks Mark Warden has nothing to do ; and it is only made to fix a limit to the scope of those which do refer to him. His was not the nature of a martyr to duty, far less was he capable of the higher love. In this respect he resembled so many that it is impossible to blame him without blaming the world at large. He had talent and energy, but not genius, and it is only genius that can afford to sacrifice itself and yet live.

And yet it may be that in spite of all this the reader may insist in setting down this man, who was determined to make the most of his talents, as a selfish and cold-blooded creature, altogether beyond the sympathy of all brave and honest men, and his apologist as at best but a devil's advocate. So be it. His defence has been made ; and if it has failed, so much the worse for him. Marie, at all events, never thought of blaming or doubting him. Whatever might become of her, he must be my Lord Chief-Justice before he died. She, too, was a little ambitious—for him. Of herself she had never thought since she was born.

There are some things upon which it is almost, if not quite, too painful to dwell ; and one is the parting of a woman from the home in which she was born, when she leaves it both for the first time and for ever. It is equal in its intensity to grief for the dead, and draws forth as many tears. And it is about the most unselfish and the purest of all sorrows. When Marie had to leave Denethorp—where, since she knew no other, her life had not on the whole been the less happy because it had been dull and poor and solitary—this natural grief was rendered the more poignant by the fact of her having to bid farewell to her native place with a stained reputation—for in places like Denethorp, when a good name is once breathed upon it is gone for ever—and of

her father having died without learning the one secret of her life. This thought was the bitterest of all. How often will it be necessary to speak of the bitterness that lies in the words "Too late" ? It is, indeed, impossible without it to speak of the daily life of any man or woman under the sun.

Far less is it necessary to speak of the visit of the Coroner to that house in Market Street to which we must now at last bid farewell, or of the judicial inquiry into the riot and the murder at Redcheater, where Marie had to appear as a witness. Warden's heart was filled with pity, and with a return of the old passion, when he saw how this girl, so dependent upon others as she was by nature, strove to bear all things, and how, for his sake and for the sake of the children, now wholly dependent upon her, she did somehow contrive to bear it all. Had it been a time to speak freely of anything but of trouble and sorrow, even he must have been impelled to declare himself her protector. But he did not do so ; and at last the final wrench was made, and Marie woke from the nightmare in which she had been living since the election to find herself in London lodgings with Ernest and Fleurette, ill, indeed, in body, but supported by the feeling that she must not dare to give way. And, after all, to know that her husband was within three miles of her was something.

Of course, for present needs, she was not absolutely penniless, for Warden, with all his claims, was not unable to prevent that. Miss Raymond, too, was generosity itself. It might be thought, too, that Miss Clare, under the circumstances, would have done something to help the orphans ; but, as has been said, if she loved her friends, it was with an almost perfect hate that she hated her enemies, and it was among the latter that she included the Leforts. Nor did her mistake

about Marie in the least affect her prejudices. And yet she was a good woman too; and the worst of it is that it is precisely good women who are most subject to the tyranny of prejudices of this nature.

Still, in spite of the help that she received, it was very evident that Marie would have to work hard, not only for her own daily bread, but for that of Ernest and Fleurette. Had she been alone, she might have thrown herself vaguely upon the world as governess or companion; but this, with her "incumbrances," as the advertisements say, was out of the question. She must become a mother to her brother and sister. Her views, formed under the advice of Warden, into which Angélique apparently entered—though doubtless for private reasons—were these: that the latter should place herself under her old master, Monsieur Prosper, in order to become a public singer, for which purpose it would be necessary that she should quit the service of Miss Raymond—this, perhaps, was a rash step, but then genius must not be lost at any price—and that the two cousins should meanwhile form one household with the children, and maintain it by means of the daily pupils whom they hoped to obtain through the recommendations of Angélique's late mistress. But still all this was very vague and uncertain at the best, especially as Marie herself was so utterly ignorant of the world, while Angélique was used to luxury, and would have to devote herself rather to study than to earning money, which must for the present be the duty of the former. Nevertheless, it seemed the least unpromising plan that could be adopted.

Monsieur Prosper was quite willing to receive back his old pupil, and to undertake to do what he could for her. But he was not so pleased for the sake of Félix, who

had heard nothing of her now for a long time; and so he took care neither to mention her to him nor to let them come across each other at his lodgings. But one day Dick Barton, who was reading the 'Trum-pet,' said:

"So I see they've hanged that man at Redcheester for the Denethorp riot. Poor devil! I dare say it was only his fun after all—and he only mistook his man. If they had only potted my friend Warden, now, he might have had his joke, and been knighted on the spot into the bargain, if it was the fashion to treat men according to their deserts."

Félix was no reader of newspapers, but the word "Denethorp" struck his ears. He questioned Barton, and learned from him all that was known to the country at large about the Denethorp riot, the murder of Monsieur Lefort and the trial of some of the rioters, of whom the Government, being determined to make an example, had caused two to be hanged,—in the teeth, it must be owned, of very doubtful evidence. But then political trials in those days were political with a vengeance.

Of course Félix cared nothing for that—he cared only for the matter so far as it regarded Angélique. Now that the return of Monsieur Prosper had enabled him to walk the streets in decent clothes, he, the very next morning, called at the house where Miss Raymond stayed when in town, and inquired after Miss Lefort. But the gorgeous footman who opened the door to him, and felt insulted, no doubt, at having had to leave his own occupations for such a purpose, only told him that Angélique was no longer there, and either would not, or could not, give him any farther information on the subject. His appearance was anything but creditable in the eyes of his informant, or rather non-informant, who snubbed him as a gentleman in livery

so well knows how to snub a fellow who is out at elbows.

But it was inevitable that he should find her out before long. The next time that he called he asked to see Miss Raymond herself, who easily remembered him as the deputy of Monsieur Prosper at Madame Mercier's. He made his own desire to obtain pupils and engagements in London his ostensible reason for seeing her; but he managed easily to learn all that he wanted to know about Angélique, and her family and her circumstances.

It was a terrible shrug of the shoulders that Monsieur Prosper gave when Miss Raymond made inquiries of him about Félix, and expressed herself willing to become his patroness also. But, seeing that Miss Raymond's patronage was worth having, he could not deprive his friend of the chance of obtaining it; and so, much against his will, he gave Félix the best of char-

acters, both from an artistic and from a moral point of view.

"After all," he thought to himself, "I am not the fellow's guardian; and if he didn't go to the devil in this way, I have no doubt he would in another. But I'll never pick up a wayside genius again."

It need not be said that, for his part, Félix had flown on the wings of love, as the phrase goes, to the house where the two girls were lodging. But neither was at home, so that his patience had to be exercised once more. By the time that he reached his own room, however, he found a note that, to him, was full of exciting matter, although it was only a request from Miss Raymond that he would attend a "*soirée musicale*," as she chose to term it, that was to be given at the house in Portman Square the very next evening. A great *prima donna* was to sing, and Mademoiselle Lefort was to make a sort of private *début*.

CORNELIUS O'DOWD.

ON SANDING THE SUGAR.

MR BRIGHT lately took pains to inform us that what we complained of as adulterations in our food and spurious additions to articles of our diet, were nothing more nor less than the "ordinary efforts of competition in trade;" and that, when we drank chicoried coffee and sanded sugar, we were simply submitting to that law by which rival shopkeepers struggle to outbid each other for public favour.

It is not a pleasant theory—nor, perhaps, altogether creditable as coming from a great social reformer. If when asking for bread we receive a stone, we feel all the bitterness of disappointment, added to all the pangs of hunger; but if when buying what we believe to be a penny loaf we are treated to a mixture of coarse meal, potato-flour, carbonate of lime, and alum, the mischief goes further; and besides the grief of disappointment, we have the misery of indigestion; and this, I contend for it, is the greater wrong of the two. The man who utterly denies me all help in my destitution is not so much my enemy as he who, assuming to benefit me, undermines my health by adulterated diet and corrupt articles of food, and who, pretending to strengthen and support, in reality is but exhausting the resources and impairing the vigour of my constitution.

To be told that the sausage compounded of decayed horse, or the mulligatawny made of a diseased donkey, are only the natural and reasonable products of commercial rivalry, and that, as the spurious article can defy competition on the score of cheapness, it is the purchaser's business to see whether he prefer his health or his money, and that the State has no other concern with the matter than to

take care that he gets his due measure of liquorice and sloe juice when he calls for port wine, and that his proper pound of black-thorn leaves are meted out to him for tea, the supervision of the State going no further than the scales or the pint-pot, perfectly indifferent as to what may be the contents of either,—all this, I say, is a great evil, and I am only astonished at its escaping with so little of reprobation or rebuke. I cannot but think, however, that the great submission with which we have received as an explanation what is little short of an insult to our understanding, is the natural result of that indolent patience we have lately acquired in accepting, as the representatives of Liberal opinions, the most insolent and oppressive class of men who have ever dictated their own notions, and as a consequence their own supremacy, to the country.

When I am told that the religion of a nation will be best consulted by the destruction of its Church, and that the rights of property will be strengthened by taking away all the protections to possession—when I am assured that, in a period of trade depression and discontent, a large dismissal of artisans and labourers will promote satisfaction and contentment, I am in a measure prepared for cabbage-water as catsup, and to accept effervescent rhubarb as champagne; and I am all the more submissive since I am informed that legislation of this kind is the natural result of competition, and that the only way in which the Whigs can outbid the Tories is by a little spurious admixture of something unwholesome. If competition by adulteration could have been limited to the licensed victuallers, it had been well for us.

Mock food and make-believe liquors are not pleasant things to think of, but they are infinitely preferable to fraudulent legislation or equivocal statecraft ; and if loyalty has been sapped, if sincere love of country has been lessened in our day, we owe these losses to the hourly increasing distrust in our public men, to the growing want of confidence in those who rule us, and to the increasing conviction that the game of party, like that of trade-competition, is pushed to an extent that rejects no amount of roguery to secure an ascendancy. Statesmanship has resolved itself into an auction, where rival traders bid against each other. "Anything after ten-pound household—going at this, gentlemen—positively going at ten-pound household—last time—only think of the sacrifice—a constitution that has lasted for centuries, a system that has challenged the whole of Europe—will no gentleman make any advance ?"

"Household suffrage !"

"Thank you, sir ; household suffrage, and twenty-one years of age. I think the gentleman said nothing after this." "To Mr Disraeli," whispers he to his clerk ; and then aloud, "A valuable lot, sir, and sold for a song !"

"Concessions to the Catholics," mutters his successor, "a very grand step." Are we quite sure England is ripe for that ? Manning, indeed, is more cautious than Wiseman, but those Irish zealots are not very manageable. Concessions, too, imply subsidies ; and who is to push a money vote through the House ? No ; this is not to be thought ; still, if we cannot exalt the Papist we can pull down the Protestant. Let us level the Irish Church. It rings well—the "alien Church," "the Badge of conquest," "the standing insult to the conscience of Irishmen !" Can the priests resist this, or can they fail after it to secure us the Irish elections ? Oh, what a deal of tall talk

is uttered about bribery and corruption when done in ten-pound notes, and how little attention it attracts when carried on as a wholesale traffic by the policy of an Administration.

These are, however, the legitimate exercises of "competition," and, as Mr Bright tells us, nothing more than the ordinary efforts of rival dealers to secure clients and customers.

Popery and Radicalism are the adulterating ingredients of politics—they are the sand to the sugar of statecraft ; and by their subtle admixture the rival dealers are able alternately each to outbid and undersell the other. How long will the consumer be satisfied with either ? is the question that many are asking, and may continue to ask until he can show a shop where they deal more honestly.

The sarcasm that called us a nation of shopkeepers has received a terrible confirmation in the conduct of our rulers, all the more damaging to our reputation since we are told that shopkeeping means fraudulent dealing, vending adulterated articles, and selling spurious wares. When by shopkeeping is understood that competition in trade that calls in knavery to sustain a rivalry, and trusts to undersell an opponent by the depreciation of the article sold, the idea of a nation of such ingredients is not at all reassuring or comfortable. When it is borne in mind that the whole tone of modern statesmanship, the whole temper of Government, is concession,—that each party that succeeds to power comes in pledged to give something, to yield something, to surrender something that its rival has not the will or the courage to concede, it is easy to imagine, not alone how ambitious men may be tempted by this auction for popular favour, but how they may be led on in their eagerness to think less of the benefit they can do their country,

than the damage they can inflict on a rival, and ultimately how impossible they make any return to power to him and to his followers.

As the party who diminish the effective forces of the nation, who reduce the orders for supplies, and sell off the reserved stores of our magazines, can always throw upon their successors the cost of repairing their own waste, and thus charge them with the increase of the estimates, so can they, by a system of lenity, and a slipshod administration of law, encourage a turbulence and outrage that must ultimately demand repression, and render the task of those who come after them one of severity and harshness. Thus the game of party goes on with something of the integrity and honesty of Mr Bright's competitive dealers!

As we are rapidly coming to that condition in matters of principle that Italy has arrived at in matters of finance, living as we do on our capital, and as the number of things which remain for us to concede to popular demand daily decreases, it would be well if we were to bethink us how long our stock of boons will last us, and what—after giving up the Church and the Colonies, the Landed Interest, the Universities, the Army, and the Peerage—will remain to us except the Monarchy, and how long is it likely *that* will endure after every buttress that supported it has been withdrawn.

It is a very significant sign of the times that the national conscience felt no shock—at least no appreciable shock—at this bold declaration of Mr Bright; that is to say, we have been, from long habit and an acquired taste, so accustomed to our brandied port and our chicoried coffee, that when we were told the same system of adulteration went

on in all around us, that our tea was “warehouse sweepings,” our bitter beer a “decoction of bullock’s liver,” our butter “a preparation of Thames mud tempered with lard,” familiarity had so accustomed us to all these flavours, it may become a grave question how far the unadulterated article could compete with the spurious or corrupted one.

Just, then, what these fraudulent licensed-victuallers have done with us in food, have the Liberals done with us in national sentiment. They have cheapened public life, vulgarised the rewards of the Crown, lowered the prestige of the great seats of learning, and, by an affectation of equality in all the conditions of life, they have, like the nefarious tea-dealers, concocted a compound that no human stomach can digest.

Mind! I do not say they have not made a very marketable commodity. I know they have. The late elections and the present House of Commons abundantly prove that there is a “roaring trade” in Radicalism just now, and that for the few “lots” that are likely to suit the market, such as the “Ballot,” the “no Bishops in the Lords,” “no Colonies,” &c., there will be a lively contest. Still, it is just possible all this may be pushed too far. They may by chance discover that they have over “sanded the sugar,” and though certainly, as the advertisements say, “they are enabled to defy competition,” it is just “on the cards,” that the public might take a turn for a cleaner life and a healthier diet, and discover that though shoddy is a cheap ware, it gets shabby very quickly, and will not bear brushing. If so, and if this happy day were to arrive, the only misgiving I have is, “Would there be a house in the trade to deal with?”

THE MESSAGE OF PEACE.

Some one has lately, and somewhat ungenerously, remarked that every distinct boon conferred by the British Parliament on what is called the National party in Ireland has been invariably followed by renewed turbulence, and more than ordinary lawlessness in that country.

Now, it is well to remember that Mr O'Connell, who for so long a time "educated" not only his "party," but the whole popular mind of Ireland, never laid such stress on any point as this—that no matter what concessions England might make—no matter to what extent she might carry her measures of conciliation, the Irish people should accept them only as part payment of a long-running debt, or as he phrased them himself, "instalments" of what our claim embraces.

As, however, every concession, from the Relief Bill downwards, has been, so to say, won from British rule by lawlessness and that spirit of defiance which have made the country wellnigh ungovernable, it was not easy to persuade a people, flushed with the successes of turbulence, to return to habits of law and order, all the more since what they had received was but a small instalment of what was due them, the great body of the debt remaining over for future payment.

But there was also another element in operation. The Catholic party—for so the plaintiffs in this suit really were—became hourly stronger by each verdict in their favour—they grew in wealth almost as rapidly as in ambition, and became every day better able to press their demands upon the State, and enforce the payment.

From the time that the late Duke of Wellington most unfortunately declared that he conceded the Catholic claims rather than risk a civil war, it has been the habit in Par-

liament to use the same sort of language, and many availed themselves of the opportunity of showing that they could be as indiscreet as a great man.

Looking at the matter from the "National" point of view, who can be surprised that the Irish should persist in a policy which had never failed them? When shooting the parsons decided the question of tithes, even a less logical people would have discovered that similar treatment might be advantageously tried on land tenure. "Help yourself, and Parliament will help you," seems to have been the tacit maxim of the National party; and if success be a test, there is little reason to call in question its wisdom.

So far as I know, Irishmen of every class had very few delusions as to the soothing virtues of what is so pathetically called the "Message of Peace." The message of peace was doubtless glad tidings at the palace of Paul Cullen, Cardinal, and might have been heard with joy in the den of that old Lion of Judah, vulgarly called MacHale; but the people—the masses—were about as much interested in it as though it were a law of international copyright with Japan; and, in consequence, its healing virtues were only illustrated by showers of threatening letters, menaces to murder, and some more than menaces also.

This was, of course, very disappointing to Englishmen. They had been hopeful, even to confidence, what this measure would effect. They worked themselves up to a white heat of enthusiasm by their own high-sounding phrases of "alien church," "Badge of conquest," and the rest of it, and actually believed that they were stimulating the expression of a great national feeling, which would soon display itself in a burst of national gratitude. Irishmen knew better. Irish-

men saw that the message of peace was about as small a dividend—a mere one-and-sixpence in the pound—as ever was flung to a creditor.

Scarcely had the parsons been sentenced than the cause of the landlords was called on, and the Nationalists, flushed with success, and well knowing besides that when John Bull is in a giving humour nothing balks him, they determined to take the tide at its flood. It was, they were given to believe, to be a case of “ask and have,” and they were not going to be very mealy-mouthed in “asking.” Ulster tenant-right, compensation for improvements, claim on eviction, and suchlike, would do well enough in ordinary times, but these were by no means ordinary times. They had fallen upon a happy era, with a Parliament that fancied it was going to inaugurate a millennium of popular rights, and a Minister who believed in a “message of peace.”

I am almost ashamed to say it, but I feel it is true, that Paddy's humour is never more thoroughly tickled, nor his sense of drollery gratified, than when he laughs at a dupe. How he must have enjoyed the present situation, and with what a racy chuckle he must have heard of the “message of peace,” I leave any one who knows Ireland to imagine.

When a bland landlord puts his head inside the door of a room where a convivial party is assembled, and says, “Order what you like, gentlemen—the gentleman next door pays,” the feeling of joy is usually unbounded, but the sense of moderation is less developed.

“What shall it be, boys?” was now the cry throughout the land. “Long leases, fixity of tenure, reduction of rents? or shall we go in for all at once, and say, No rents—no landlords?”

While these different opinions were being urged and discussed there came in other men, who, probably, having little land and less

religion, cared very little about landlords or Churchmen. Their cry was: “Down with these traf-fickers! Down with these mess-of-pottage patriots! Accept nothing from England till she liberates the Fenian convicts. We want no boons, we crave no favours—we demand justice for Ireland!”

Well might the Cabinet acknowledge themselves puzzled and dum-founded. Could inconsequence go farther than this? It was like saying to an hospital surgeon, “If you want to cure that man's dropsy in No. 4, you must lithotomise the patient in No. 3.” Now, whether our great State operator did not see the logical force of this proposition, or had his misgivings about its efficacy, and whether, as some have opined, he was getting generally out of temper with “messages of peace,” he demurred to the suggestion. At all events, he determined in a true spirit of courtesy to make his reply in the tone of the demand; and, to show that he could be as little bound by logic as the petitioners, he said, “I shall liberate these men who are under sentence for treason-felony whenever some other people elsewhere give up shooting their neighbours.”

I do not know if this was a “message of peace,” but certainly—and I leave the explanation to wiser heads than mine—it was the only reply I ever heard to an Irish demand that proved unanswerable. The blow was so thoroughly Irish, the Bull was so like the native article, Paddy went down under it at once.

The success obtained on this memorable occasion only suggests to us the regret that, instead of “messages of peace,” the Minister should not have limited himself to such rejoinders as this. “*Si sic omnia*,” might we exclaim; and if Irishmen were not persuaded into peace, it is possible they may be puzzled into it! If Pat had been told that these men were not fit subjects for royal mercy, that reasons of justice

as well as reasons of policy alike opposed their liberation, that nothing in their conduct implied regret for the past or promised submission for the future, he would have asked nothing better than to discuss and demolish each and all of these pleas in one of his newspapers. He was ready to encounter the want of clemency, the want of sentiment, the want of generous trustfulness and hope; but what he was not, could not be, prepared for, was the want of logic. This was like a blow below the belt, and it floored him completely.

A very easy illustration will show the logical force of this reply. When Garibaldi lay a prisoner, after the disastrous day of Aspromonte, the

Liberal party made many attempts to move the Government to an act of clemency. They certainly were able to urge their suit with reasons and on grounds which the most ingenious of Irishmen would find difficult to apply to O'Donovan Rossa. M. Rattazzi demurred to the arguments, however, and showed that even the great services of a great patriot could not establish a claim to convulse the nation he had once aided to establish, and subvert the monarchy; but he assuredly never told the petitioners that Aspromonte should be forgotten when brigandage was suppressed in Calabria, or that Garibaldi should be liberated whenever Ninco-Nunco was captured!

THE TWO SAFE CAREERS.

There are two roads to popularity in England, which, I believe, never fail—that is, never fail when walked by intelligent and skilful travellers. One or other of these suffices for the ambition of most men, though now and then we do see some glutton of the world's favour taking a "apell" at both of them. To be successful in the age we live in, you must be AN ECONOMIC REFORMER OF AN INJURED MAN. I have not done wisely in writing them in this order, since I believe, for great success—for lasting, profitable, effectual success—it is better to be "injured" than "economical." I know it is more difficult as a *role*. The part demands many qualities. A grievance is not difficult to find; any three-volume novelist would provide one as easily as a plot. The way of urging your misfortune on the world, of showing that you have a grave case against humanity, of which each who listens to you is, in a measure, a party in cause, with this added embarrassment, that he is occasionally in the dock and occasionally

in the jury-box,—this is what demands address. I have said that the injured man should have many qualities. He must be "insistant;" no matter what the world is thinking of—a Russian war, a cotton famine, a Fenian rising, or a "woman righting"—the injured must be heard amidst them all, if not overtopping the din, taking every favourable moment of stillness to scream out about his wrongs. Next he must be "plausible." I do not say logical, because the mass of his hearers attach little value to logic; but he must be of that persuasive order which knows how, by enlisting probabilities to do duty for facts, and making inferences mount guard for just conclusions, to make a strong case for the world. He must know how to skip or slur over any inconvenient or damaging circumstance, or how to class it with those low calumnies that he could not stoop to refute. He must be by nature of a haughty temper, so that the amount of the humility with which he makes his appeal to the public may show what a price

he attaches to human sympathy. This painful yielding to fate can be made very effective. It is like the low bow of a man with the lumbago! who would rather wrench his loins than risk your favour.

He must be picturesque, so as never to place details ill or incongruously, and to have no false lights. He must be passionate, but with the subdued vehemence of a man whose breeding restrains him, and who would no more think of violating the decorous quietudes of society than he would interrupt a preacher in the pulpit. He must, amidst much sadness and sorrow, be trustful, fully reliant on the justice that, though long in coming, is sure to come at last; and in this sort of "time bargain" with his hearers he is able to insinuate that, though it take long to make them his partisans, they will live to become such. Lastly, he must exhibit that quality of impatience which is tempered by pride, and seems to say, "It's your verdict I care for; show me that you see how shamefully I have been wronged and outraged, and take your own time about the damages." Now the world is very fond of a man of this sort, and rarely grudges a sentimental satisfaction when not pressed for more.

Now it will be seen, even by this passing glance, that to be an injured man one should have what Henry Grattan used to call "great variety;" and in this it is distinguished from that other career with which I have associated it, the economical reformer, who really has no variety whatever.

Surgeons, I believe, are well agreed in regarding amputation as the reproach and not the triumph of their art; and that the man who rescues one limb from the necessity of the knife stands immeasurably higher than he who has successfully amputated some hundreds. I wish that our political physicians could learn a little of this philosophy,

especially our economists, who are all for the knife. No, simple as such State surgery is, it is of all others the most sure to achieve success. It demands, you will say, no high exercise of genius to reduce the army by ten thousand men, to place eight ships of war out of commission, to recall the garrison of a colony, or dismiss the shipwrights of a dockyard. All this is easy knife-work, and it smacks of boldness and decision—two qualities we in England hold in very high repute. "I like Dr Childers," I think I hear some one say; "he doesn't go humming and hawing—he says it must 'come off.' Crutches or a wooden leg are sorry contrivances, I know; but remember," says he, "what a deal you'll save in shoe-leather! With only one leg you'll not have that taste for long walks, those excursions which cost you so much formerly. You'll not be an Alpine Clubbist, nor even an excursionist in Wales; and it is wonderful how you will reconcile yourself to a little toddle over a grass plat, and come to find it agrees with you besides." It would not have been easy to persuade John Bull of all this formerly. He was strong and hearty, and he had rather a pride in showing the foreigner that he was both. You would never have persuaded him against kicking the fellow that insulted him on the ground of the damage it might do his boots. Now, however, that line of argument has attained a triumphant success. If I, as an economical reformer, appeal to the British tax-payer in this shape, and say, Now, Mr Briggs—we shall call him Briggs, because 'Punch' calls that man in the punt who is always fishing but catches nothing, Mr Briggs—now, Mr Briggs, I would ask you, do *you* want the Cape of Good Hope, or does Mrs Briggs positively insist on Gibraltar? Would you not rather have an outing at midsummer, and

take the Misses Briggs to Inter-lachen, than retain the ninety-something regiment at New Zealand? You may not think so; but I'll show you, I'll prove to you, that if you don't keep colonies you might keep a coach. Now, wouldn't you rather have a pony-chaise than such share as you possess in the Channel Islands? And as to warlike armaments, tell me candidly, are they toys that amuse *you*? Frenchmen like them, and Russians like them. It is, as Dr Watts says, "their nature to." But how can it appeal to you to care for them?—you whose insular position—not to speak of the volunteers—secures you from attack; and who, so far from ambitioning increase of territory, only want to know who would take Malta off your hands, when you have disembarrassed yourselves of Gibraltar?

"I'll tell you how to make two hundred a-year," said an Irish Chief Baron, of caustic memory, to a barrister of no very lucrative practice. "To save is to gain: and what I advise you is, Never go circuit." Now, in this philosophy all the present schemes of our rulers are comprised. Our economies consist in how much we can give up. Nor is there anything the nation loves to hear better than the number of things it can do without. By the degree in which any one recommends these savings is he called a reformer or a revolutionist. The former cries out against second majors in the army; the last declares for no monarchy in the State.

And it is wonderful what notoriety a man will gain simply by doing either.

Our gifted reformers are only plagiarists of the Irish judge; and the grand secret of their policy is, "doing without." In telling people this great truth, there are various opportunities for sly flatteries which the nation is rather fond of hearing:—how enlightened she is! how superior to what she was in former times, in those barbarous days of Blenheims and Waterloos! What a noble conquest it is when a people can proclaim a victory over their pride, their military glory, their ascendancy among the nations, and simply say, We are mere shopkeepers, and we aspire to be no more! we declare that we have a mission—in Sheffield goods and printed cottons, but none other.

This is a line of life that asks for a very small intellectual capital. "Non contiget cuique" to conduct India to prosperity, or Ireland to peace; but any man can cut down the estimates. It requires no genius to put admirals on the retired list, or dismiss every third clerk in a public department. It is all easy surgery; and with this advantage over the doctor's art, that there is no need to look after the wounded arteries, nor care for the spilt blood.

If all horticulture consisted in cutting down, gardeners would be as plentiful as blackberries, and about as profitable.

OUR DIPLOMATIC SERVICE.

Whenever the English people is very certain of anything; whenever the great newspapers have made a stock subject of any grievous abuse; when the whole nation has become so imbued with the theme that we accept it, whatever it be, as something to be endured and put up with like the impurity of the Thames or the tiresomeness of Martin Tupper,—then, I say, we are sure to hear that some one has moved for a special committee in the House to examine witnesses and report on it, and we have a very lively little squabble in Parliament over the people who ought or ought not to serve on that committee—though what they have to ascertain, what to discover, develop, or disclose, beyond what the world is already fully possessed of, there is no man on either side of the House could propound.

Some years back there was a special committee to inquire into the constitution and working of the diplomatic service. It had always been a stock subject of attack by Radical members, partly because they believed, or assumed to believe, it was a “caste,” and that its followers were a sort of Brahmins, who guarded the entrance against all plebeian competitors; and partly because they deemed that all international questions should be discussed in Parliament, and never be treated by what they called secret diplomacy.

As to the first of these two allegations, a mere glance at any Foreign Office List is the speediest refutation; and as regards the second, a very passing consideration of the class of questions which are dealt with by envoys and ministers will show that they are most commonly of a kind that could not be advantageously submitted to open discussion without the gravest inconvenience, or sometimes even

peril; and that the friendly relations which are maintained in a great degree by the courteous observances and the forbearance which characterise the intercourse of gentlemen, would be often endangered by the freedoms which are inseparable from debate, and the rash imputations which honest, but not always well-informed speakers, will throw out in the heat of a discussion.

If the lovers of what is called open diplomacy have not been converted by what they lately witnessed in the case of Mr Reverdy Johnson, they must be men of stubborn powers of resistance. No one can doubt that, with the goodwill of which he was the bearer, and with the amicable disposition he was himself inspired by, the Alabama question might have received at the time of his visit to England a safe and satisfactory solution. There was everything to favour such a belief. The moment was one in which each country was well disposed towards the other. The acrimony which the press has so often stimulated was happily dormant. There were no travellers or tourists on either side with their personal grievances developed into national indictments, and their small misadventures made chargeable against the manners of the land they were visiting; and yet with all these to aid him, a very genial and well-intentioned gentleman, by simply taking the public into his confidence in a case that demanded wise and delicate, and, above all, confidential treatment, so mismanaged the negotiation as to make agreement impossible, provoke his own recall, and actually bequeath to his successor an issue a hundred times more difficult than ever it was before. The indiscretion of his public utterances not only were such as to alarm his own countrymen, but

actually to suggest to ourselves the fear that this genial warm-hearted gentleman was crowing over the easy success he had obtained over us, and how willingly we had suffered ourselves to become the dupes of his pleasant flatteries and his seductive address. Now, had he only kept his blandishments for Lord Stanley, there would have been no harm done. The greatest grumbler amongst us, though he might have demurred to the conditions of the settlement, would never have questioned the modes of the persuasion. We would, in fact, all of us have made every allowance for soft-sawder; what we only objected to was, that the sawders should have been heated before our eyes.

The whole success of a diplomatic negotiation lies in the character of the confessional that envelops it. The on-honour consciousness with which the negotiators treat is not at all inconsistent with the conduct of men who, differing as they may do on some points, are eagerly bent on ascertaining how far some of the items of agreement may not outbalance those of distance and estrangement; and all this has to be done with candour and fairness and integrity, not with the shrewd reserves or the petty equivocations of a small lawyer—and done, too, with a consciousness that the result come to will have to undergo the judgment of the press not alone of one country, but possibly of Europe. Surely these are not the cases that call for popular discussion and the rough usage of open debate, where hard terms are bandied and ugly motives alleged, and where the chief actors, only known through the mention of newspaper correspondence, will often be handled with scant courtesy, or scant regard to fact. We are not very delicate in discussing our own public men, and when opposed to us we certainly treat them with unsparing candour; but all this frankness is the refinement of reserve compared

to the mode in which we talk of foreigners. Messrs Benet, Bismark, Gortchakoff, and Antonelli could tell us, if they would, how pleasant it would be to conduct a platform negotiation in Trafalgar Square, with probably Mr Beales for the reporter, or Mr Odger to draw up the protocol.

There are fully as many reasons for delicacy in dealing with the ills of nations as with the maladies of individuals, and there are cases where the safety of either would be gravely compromised by exposure; and it is for such cases that we need the services not only of the most skilful and adroit men amongst us, but also of the most confidentially-reserved and cautious-minded men, fully impressed with the fact that the success of all negotiation is mainly dependent on the extent to which they inspire confidence themselves and exact it from others; and herein lies the greatest gift of the best negotiator.

There is another point on which the public is not unfrequently led astray with regard to the qualifications meet for this service. There is a considerable number of persons, of whom a late writer of a letter to the 'Daily News' has made himself the spokesman, who would like to reduce the diplomatic service to the state of a clerkship, and assume all its requirements to be fulfilled when provided with a certain number of gentlemen who wrote good round legible hands, were accurate copyists, and punctual in observance of office hours. Now, all of these are admirable and excellent qualities, and no mission could dispense with their absence; but surely they do not sum up the duties of an envoy at a foreign court. The most careless reader of his newspaper cannot fail to see that the present condition of Europe is far from settled; that the vast changes called into existence by late wars have not yet resolved themselves into finality, or

even a passing state of repose ; and if we are not at this moment spectators of a great war on the Continent, it is simply because they who should stand out as adversaries have not been able to consolidate the alliances on which they might rely in the day of a reverse. France and Prussia are both angling with the same bait ; and, up to this, Russia and Austria, and even Italy, are reluctant to pledge themselves with either. Now, so linked are the fortunes of each State of Europe with the other, that no movement can take place in one without corresponding changes elsewhere. The uprising of France will threaten the independence of Belgium, the safety of Northern Germany, the Rhine border, and the small States contiguous to it—not to speak of Italy, which may become either ally or enemy, as the French determine by their occupation of, or departure from, Rome. The movement of Russia implies the re-opening of the Eastern question—that is, the actual existence of Turkey.

It can scarcely be said that to these events, and the great consequences that may follow on them, we are indifferent. The Scheldt a French river, and Constantinople a Russian dock, are not insignificant eventualities ; and though our envoys abroad might not be able to avert the wars that might menace such results, they might neutralise the combinations and modify the alliances that should influence them. They might, by judicious representations, delay action and give time for more peaceful counsels ; and they certainly could always not only apprise us at home of the coming danger, but enable us to determine on the course most suited to our national advantage. Now it is not assuming too much to say that the men most fitted to obtain this knowledge, and to sift the evidence on which it is founded ; to test the sources of information, and to draw correct

inferences from what they glean in their personal intercourse with colleagues and persons in office,—are not usually of the class of mere departmental clerks, but should be men of considerable natural acuteness, aided by trained habits and well-drilled faculties. They should be consummate observers, fortified by travel to enable them to distinguish between national habits and modes of thought or expression and traits that had a deeper significance—men of the world enough to make their intercourse agreeable and easy, and with that social tact that invites confidence by the very evidence of its honourable understanding to respect it—men of great discretion, who, mixing freely in society, disarm distrust by personal loyalty of character, and yet do not compromise their position by a rash utterance. They should be statesmen, in comprehending the bearing of great questions and tracing the results that might come of them ; and courtiers, to render their intercourse with sovereigns acceptable and satisfactory. And, last of all, they should be able writers—men capable of conveying their intelligence clearly, briefly, and unmistakably—able to set forth in a despatch the whole details of a question with simplicity and decision, and to show the reasons for any judgment they have come to with force and perspicuity. These, in brief, are but some of the qualifications of an envoy ; but are even these to be looked for in a mere clerk ?

Now, when it is borne in mind that these men are the Preventive Police of Europe—that it is to their activity and to their efficiency we owe, in a great measure, the peace of the world—and that five days of war-like preparation would cost more than a fifty years' maintenance of the whole diplomatic service of the Continent,—surely it is not too much to say that they are worthy public servants, and justly deserving of

the high place we accord them. It is suggested, as a measure of economy, that we should suppress some of the smaller missions, and withdraw our ministers from Stuttgart, Brussels, Munich, &c. There can be no question of the saving. If you can dispense with so many persons of your household, you are gainer by the added amount of their salaries. Now the writer to the 'Daily News' served himself in diplomacy, and thoroughly well knows that at these smaller courts there is a vast amount of information obtainable which could not be procured at larger centres, and that as the fortunes of the larger States involve the fate of the smaller, these latter are the first to take alarm at casualties whose course they can little influence, while the results may be vital to themselves. If inquired into, it would be found that some of the earliest warnings of great events abroad have come from the smaller missions; and the French are so well aware of this, that to such places as Baden, or Berne, or Coburg, they invariably send secretaries who have shown promise of future distinction. To call this "espionage," or any other hard name, is easy enough—and in the platitudes that men utter about openness and fairness, of course such a mode of attack has its success; but in that Spanish marriage intrigue, by which M. Guizot intended to outwit us, and by which he lost his master his throne, it was the artful employment of such agency discovered the intrigue; and the same active skill enabled us to anticipate M. Thiers in '41, and bring the Pacha to terms before the wily Minister had made Egypt a French province.

That Austria was not very ably served at Berlin prior to the late war in Germany, nor France well

seconded in Italy when M. Use-
dom cemented the Prussian alliance, are converse evidences of what diplomacy may or may not do; but that the moves of the great Cabinets are very often to be discovered at the smaller Courts, is known to all persons in the service; and Lord Malmesbury has lately declared that it was from Hanover and Switzerland he first heard that the Austrians had passed the Ticino, and that the French Emperor had contracted for the surrender of Savoy to France.

Though, of course, I am prepared to hear the "cui bono?" cry to this assertion, and to be told that whether we knew of these facts on a Monday through an envoy, or on Wednesday from our 'Times,' was not a matter of much moment. In certain cases this would doubtless be true; but there are others in which it would be of immense importance that a Minister should be in possession of information before it had reached the press, and became the subject of comment and discussion. Nor would it be difficult to quote instances in which this early acquaintance with projected moves was employed to interfere with the accomplishment of a diplomatic success that would have been totally impossible if the contemplated action had once attained publicity, and entered the domain of that public opinion which, with all its advantages, has the occasional demerit of pronouncing on scanty evidence, and very hurriedly also. I do not augur hopefully for the present committee, who seem rather bent on inquiring what an *attaché* can live on, than what a Minister should do. At all events we shall learn something, even though it only be the price of lodgings at St Petersburg, or the cost of washing at Bogota!

THE DIFFICULT PRECEPT.

Of all the Christian virtues we are enjoined to cultivate, I know of not one so difficult as "to love one's neighbour."

It is not to the amount of the affection I would take exception, though I am aware that in the height of the standard lies a great difficulty, and that there must be few men comparatively in the world who could transfer the stock of their self-love to the account of their neighbour. The really great difficulty of the precept is in the fact that he is your neighbour.

Why is it, and to what is it owing, that we have a natural antipathy to a Frenchman? I will not stop to dispute the proposition, which I sincerely trust no thorough Englishman will contest; but ask simply, for what other reason do we dislike him but that he is our neighbour? The man who lives next door to me must be hateful to me. I see too much and I know too little of him not to detest him. His hours of going out and coming home—his calls of business or pleasure—the errands of his manservant and his maid-servant, and the visits of the stranger within his gates—will, in spite of me, invade my leisure. If his pursuits are like my own, he jars on me with a rivalry; if his road in life lies quite apart, he revolts me by outraging my sympathies; if he deals with my tradesfolk, I suspect him of being better treated than I am, that he gets honester measure in his coals, and more cream in his milk; if his acquaintance runs in an humbler current than my own, I inveigh against the vulgar contact of his associates; if they who frequent him are of an order superior to my own friends, my dislike is heightened by a sense of envy. Now, had he only lived in the next street instead of next door, I had known none of these things, and

his new liveries had never cost me a pang, nor had that splendid haunch of venison I saw carried in but yesterday disgusted me with my own tough mutton at dinner.

It is in the points of contact that are never touches of cohesiveness, lies all the antipathy. That we are ready to forgive Russians, Germans, and Italians, scores of things we cannot put up with in the Frenchman, none will deny. It comes to this, that the man next door is positively odious from the number of times every day some feature of his life will obtrude itself on our own, and seem, out of sheer impertinence, to insist on occupying a share in our attention. The very people who ring at our bell in mistake for his are an offence; and our identity—that dear thing we cling to through all our mishaps in the world—is outraged at being confounded and mistaken for another's. And as for the little compliments and courtesies of life that, intended for him, have by an accident been left at our door, they are the dregs of all bitterness in our cup of disappointment. How came it ever to my imagination to ponder over the insignificance of my lot if it were not for that card from Buckingham Palace which a blundering messenger had dropped with me instead of next door?

That inveterate dislike that exists between Whigs and Tories is solely felt because they live in the same street, and are next door to each other; while neither has the same antipathy to the Radical, who dwells in the "stable-lane round the corner"—a vulgar dog if you like, but not a bad sort of fellow at bottom; and this is the judgment solely founded on the fact that his ways and doings are not in hourly contact with our own.

The rancour of party hatred never reached its climax till we

saw the two rival factions contending to carry the same measures—that is, till they came to live side by side. In the old days of opposite views and objects they fought their battles boldly, bravely, manfully, but there was no acrimony, for their houses were not next door. It was only in our own day that it occurred to them to become neighbours, and we see what has come of it.

So long as each hunted his own line of country, one might say that his neighbour's dogs were slow to find, and ran wildly; or the other might retort, that his pack were mostly mongrels, and never gave voice together. Still each could follow his sport without interruption, and on the whole no very serious bad feeling came of it. But now that they are driven to draw the same cover, and have only one fox between them, there's nothing too bad for each to say of the other. Mr Disraeli declares the fox was his fox, and that if he had not hunted him before, it was because he was employed teaching some friends to ride—"educating them," he called it, to take fences and ditches they weren't used to. Mr Gladstone denied this; that the fox had strayed out of his cover; and that he felt the unsportsmanlike conduct of his neighbour so acutely, that he would rather dispose of his pack and give up hunting for the season.

Nothing of this would have happened had each kept to his own county. All the bad feeling came of propinquity; for, be it remarked, neither of them was displeased when the Radicals came out and took a run with them.

They tell us that the law of primogeniture makes a man little affectionate to his eldest son, but full of love for his grandchild; and here it is, once more, the next-door neighbour there is no forgiving, and even he a little farther off is preferable to him! As for that

old adage of the Romans, that declares "loving the same and hating the same" constitutes true friendship, I take it there never was a greater fallacy. Real sympathy is the sense of enjoyment I feel when I see my friend delighted by something I don't care for. If any one disputes my definition, let him think how inconvenient the converse would prove in our courts of divorce, and that even the most gushing heart is not bound to like a Correspondent.

Whose dog keeps me awake all night? whose daughters' duets drive me distracted half the day? whose duns come thundering at my knocker? whose telegrams startle me from my sleep? whose whole life is it that will run Rhone-like through the placid Geneva-Lake of my existence, and by its strong current mar the grand tranquillity of my days?—My neighbour's.

When I read of the projects for bridging over the strip of sea between Dover and Calais, or the plans for tunnelling a road beneath the waters; when I hear the speculations of those who believe that, by what they call "drawing closer to France," we shall cultivate more surely the relations of friendship, and more effectually combat the mistrusts and prejudices that beset the relations between strange peoples,—when, I say, I see and hear these things, I ask myself, Where have they lived who enunciate these doctrines? What experiences have they had of life? What lesson has the world taught them, if it be not this,—That where there is no common bond of interest to bind men, no unity of pursuit or object, there is no more sure promoter of bickering, bad feeling, and dislike, than too close proximity.

I have occasional twinges of gout; lobster mayonnaise, with cucumber, washed down with iced Moselcup, do not agree with me as well as it used to do; nor are my morning recollections of anchovy sandwiches

and "bishops" as free from repinings as once they were. "*Tempora mutantur,*" and digestive organs "*cum illis;*" and there do come moments when life is scrape-covered, and when in my discontent with the world I include myself, and have to own that there is not a grievance nor an ill that assails me for which I am not personally responsible, and that for every hard turn of fortune I have been an aider and abettor. At such moments as these—and of late years they have a habit of coming oftener than I care for,—

at such moments as these—when I am soured with life—when I see, or think that I see, Fortune has dealt me all the small cards of the pack, and never a trump—when I feel myself walking the world's stage without a part in the comedy—scarcely a supernumerary—rather a creature that has strayed in from "the flats," and like enough to be hooted off if discovered,—at such periods of existence as these, I do believe I like my neighbour pretty much like myself, and I wish him joy of the affection.

PERSONAL AND PECULIAR.

Fate—for reasons I do not care to question or find great fault with—gave me very wandering habits early in life, and later on made me a resident at some part or other of the Continent. So far as personal advantage, and what are called the successes of life, are concerned, there is not much to be said for this choice. As regards enjoyment—I mean such enjoyment as usually comes within the scope of humble men of small ambitions and smaller fortunes—the case is not so bad a one. At all events, the tide of life runs less strongly than with us at home; and for a bad swimmer this is something. At another opportunity I shall perhaps return to this theme, whose pros and cons require some care in their treatment. My business is now with a—"case of conscience," I was going to call it: not that exactly; but it is a case sufficiently doubtful to make it a burden on my own mind; and I would therefore be thankful for any friendly counsel that might help me to a conclusion.

In appealing thus broadcast to the world for advice, I am not presumptuous enough to imagine that I have established any claim upon my readers which would entitle me to this freedom. I am simply, however, following a custom which

has a certain currency in the times we live in, and is, as I see, much followed in Ladies' Magazines,—I mean, of submitting a case for an opinion, hoping that the next number may bring the reply. Thus, in a journal before me, I read—"I am applied to for the payment of a pair of silk stockings, which I paid for, but have lost the receipt. Am I bound to pay, or can I resist the demand?"—"Tom kissed me twice yesterday evening, and said he wished I were his wife. Would this enable me to recover damages if he should not marry me yet?"—"My father was a Finlander, and my mother a Greek. Can you say if this gives me a claim to American citizenship?"—"I have been considerably hurt by a peg in my right boot, and kicked the bootmaker in consequence. Is it true that the Chief-Justice has ruled this to be a justifiable violence?"—"My father has obtained a decree *nisi* against my stepmother. If it should be made a rule absolute, can I marry her—and how soon?"

I take these at random as specimens of what doubts beset the British mind; nor is it without a sense of pride that I see the natural desire of pure-intentioned individuals to distrust their own impulses, and throw themselves upon

their fellow-men for guidance and direction.

To return to myself. Mine is a much smaller difficulty than any of these. Indeed I do not know if it would present what could be called a difficulty to any mind versed in the complex questions of busy life.

Here is my case. Long a resident abroad, it has been my custom to make occasional visits to Ireland—that is to say, I have rarely suffered three or four years to pass without going there for at least some weeks. These visits were about the very pleasantest incidents of my life. I liked the country, and I liked the people. There were scores of things in their ways, their sayings and doings, that pleased me better than all I met elsewhere. There was so much cordiality, so much frankness, so little reserve about anything, and there was so little seriousness even in the gravest occupations of life, it was impossible not to feel the same relief from care amongst them that one feels when amused and carried away by a well-acted comedy.

As I have said, these chance visits were very delightful to me, not the less so that I was always the guest of an old schoolfellow who had never married, and whose humour it was to keep a capital house a short distance from Dublin, and give the pleasantest dinners in the world. His house was charmingly situated at the foot of the Dublin mountains, with some old timber to shelter it, and a view of the bay and the islands, that, seen on a summer morning, will give a more flat rebuke to Mr Disraeli's "melancholy ocean" than any poor words of mine. My friend O. was well off as regarded fortune, and had all that popularity that a genial nature, a fine temper, good manners, and a hospitable board have a right to secure a man.

He had a passion for giving dinners, and he became an adept in

the art—that is, he knew how much to do, and what to leave undone. He felt that for the cook and the cellar he was wholly responsible, and he did not shirk the burden. Long experience, however, had taught him not to be over-careful in "packing" his company. His great secret was, no detrimentals—no people positively obnoxious; beyond this he tried nothing. There was, in consequence, no strain—no effort anywhere; no man had any mission to tell something himself, or make another tell it; neither was there any political colour detectable. Tories, Whigs, and Radicals hobnobbed and jested together; and as the claret passed round, it seemed to rivet a chain that bound men in hearty good-fellowship, while leaving them to think their own thoughts on many things too grave to be dealt with passingly.

My friend Ogle—why should I hesitate about naming one whom so many must recognise already?—need I say it?—was no small element in the pleasure these visits yielded me; nor need I conceal that I was an honoured guest. Not that I could cut any conspicuous figure amidst that clever company he drew around him—the pleasant officials fresh from the gossip of the House and the season, the smart lawyers with only enough business to ballast their agreeability, and, better than either, the pretty women; for, be it known, my friend affected a "croquet lawn," and sprinkled his dinners with "muslin." And here let me say, in parenthesis, that three or four women in a party of twelve is perfection; they must be somebody's wives, doubtless, but no disadvantage is it if they be there without their husbands. Of that aide-de-camp who is on service, or of that Attorney-General who is in his place in Parliament, or, better still, of that colonel of hussars who is bronzing his cheeks at Benares, and boring the Horse Guards to send him home—these, with a young widow to lead

the way, and take the fences before them, are the moral truffles that impart zest and bouquet to the feast.

Time was when the end of my journey brought me to such joys as these, cheered with the jolliest of welcomes, and heart-warmed by the sight of the scores of things rich in pleasant memories. I make no scruple of owning that I did my utmost to requite—to what the French call *payer de ma personne*—all these amenities. I brought over good store of that sort of social gossip which serves to purposes of talk what the doctors entitle in their jargon “the vehicle.” I had my budget of stories and drolleries warranted new—the little equivocal narratives which, in my character of a foreigner, were permitted me; these, with sketches of life and character in other latitudes, were, so to say, specialties in which I dreaded no rivalry. I had, besides, in those days, good spirits, though what has become of them now I know no more than what has become of the hair of my head. I can only vouch for it, they have both left me, and I have neither fun nor “forelock.” Nor were little flatteries wanting to fill the measure of my enjoyment. “I was asked to meet you, Mr O’Dowd,” would say a soft voice. “We were to have left for town on Wednesday, Mr O’Dowd, but when we heard that you were certain to arrive,” &c. &c. Or in rougher tones: “Corny, old fellow, I have risked an arrest for this dinner; and there’s O’Hagan has lost the first day of the assizes for it.” Alas and alack! I am to hear no more of such as these; and if my chair is empty now at the *table-d’hôte* at the “Angel,” the landlord chuckles over my absence with a laugh like the sound of five shillings in copper.

But I must finish. I cannot bear to recall memories that half overwhelm me. From one cause or another, my visits “home”—I used to

call them—grew rarer and rarer; and though Ogle, who hated letter-writing, pressed me repeatedly and warmly to come over, I gave up my wanderings, and it is now fully five years since I crossed St George’s Channel for what I feel to be the last time. Now, my question is this: I have been reading over the debate on the Irish Land Bill, and amongst its provisions I find one—I don’t know whether it be “Ulster custom,” or some new device of clever statecraft—whether it owes its origin to Gladstonian ingenuity, or the prolific suggestions of Mr Bright—but I say I find something that seems to say, when you have been long on a man’s land, and made a good thing of it, but that you are minded to quit the place and go elsewhere, it is the owner’s duty to requite you for that caprice, or necessity, or whatever it be; and if not his, somebody else’s duty, whenever he succeeds you in that locality. I hope I am not going to make any claim upon the host who has fed and housed me so long, whose claret I have drunk, whose cobs I have ridden, whose no end of sixpences I have won at whist; but will any legal friend inform me—Have I not, under the new Act, a just claim against the man who succeeds to my holding, or could I not legally dispose of my vested right to so much turtle and champagne as it was my proud privilege once to enjoy there? Is not this the custom of Ulster? God bless it! for it seems a very charming usage. Surely some Q.C. of my acquaintance will kindly instruct me what are my rights here, and how may I enforce them.

Mind—and I desire not to be misunderstood—I make no claim for improvements. I neither pretend that a good story of mine lingers in the air, or that a flash of my imagination lights up a corner of the dining-room. I set up no claim for the night I made the archbishop laugh, or persuaded Mr

Solicitor to imitate himself in his opening speech in Parliament—great successes, but still under the head of improvements, of which the tenant enjoyed the value. All I pretend to is, what Ulster has now made into a law, that I should be empowered to dispose of something that is not mine, when I have no further wish for its temporary enjoyment.

When the Prime Minister admits his inability to define the "custom of Ulster," I shall certainly not undertake the task. I find it, however, in a recognised organ of public intelligence, stated to be something in this wise: "One man wants to give up a tenure, another desires to possess it; but before the transfer takes place, the incoming must pay to the outgoing for what is called the 'goodwill.'" The definition is loose enough, but still sufficiently distinctive to enable me to ask, Does it apply to *my* case? May I hope to profit by its provisions? That I am in possession of the "goodwill," I have little reason to doubt; whether I can dispose of it to another, is the question.

There are men who take a lifetime to establish a habit. They require years to engrain a custom into them. This is not so with me. I have a positive genius for routine; and it is much harder on a man like myself to surrender something he has grown used to, than for one of those flippant, volatile, inconstant spirits, whose great necessity is variety. Should I not, therefore, have claim to a higher

measure of compensation than one of these nomad creatures who does not care where he lives or how he dines?

Again, the "stupid party," as it is the polite phrase now to call the Conservatives, will inveigh against this measure as a violation of the law of contract—as if there was ever such a thing as free contract in Ireland! Ask any Irishman you like—I don't care of what party or religion—has he secured the position, has he obtained the office, he desires in life? has he taken the farm at the rent he would have wished? has he married the woman he wanted to marry? What, in a word, has he ever done to his complete satisfaction? Is not everything that takes place in that country what the Italians call "*alla meglio*"? and is it not in this spirit the Prime Minister says to the landlord, There's a poor devil who has been living ten years on your estate, and he is tired of the place, and sick of paying rent—give him a few hundred pounds for the trouble of being turned out, and perhaps he'll go quietly?

It is into this category I desire to come. I want to be paid for giving up something I have long enjoyed as a privilege, when it is no longer my pleasure to practise it. That is the "custom of Ulster," I am told; and when once it gets a wider acceptance in life, the world will be altogether far pleasanter to live in—at least, for men as poor as

CORNELIUS O'DOWD.

JOHN.—PART VII.

CHAPTER XX.

KATE was very much perplexed by her interview with her lover, and by the abrupt conclusion of his visit. She was very sweet-tempered and good-natured, and could not bear to vex any one; but perhaps it pained her secretly a little to be brought in contact with those very strong feelings which she scarcely understood, and which did not bear much resemblance to her own tender, affectionate, caressing love. She was very fond of John; at bottom she knew and felt that of all the men she had ever seen, he was the man whom she preferred trusting her life and happiness to. Had she been driven to the very depths, and power given her to express her feelings, this would have been what she would have said; and when opportunity served she was very willing to give him her smiles, her sweet words, to lean her head against him, caressing and dependent, to bestow even a soft unimpassioned kiss; but to think of nothing but John, to resign any part of her duties as mistress of the house, or to neglect other people, and make them uncomfortable, on account of him, would never have occurred to her. And there was in her mind at the same time something of that fatal curiosity which so often attends power. She wanted to know how far her power could go: it gave her a thrill of excitement to speculate upon just touching the utmost borders of it, coming to the verge of loss and despair, and then mending everything with a touch of her hand or sudden smile. By nature Kate seemed to have been so completely separated from all tragical possibilities. She had never wanted anything in all her life that had not been procured for her. Everything had given way to

her, everything conspired to give her her will. And what if she should give herself one supreme pleasure to end with, and skirt the very edge of the abyss, and feel the awful thrill of danger, and go just within a hair's-breadth of destruction? Kate's heart beat as the thought occurred to her. If she could do this, then she might sip the very essence of tragedy, and never more be obliged to despise herself as ignorant of intense emotions—while yet she would still keep her own happiness all the time to fall back upon. Such was the thought—we cannot call it project—which gradually shaped itself in Kate's mind, and which accident went so far to carry out.

"So he has gone," her father said to her; "we have not paid our deliverer sufficient attention, I suppose."

"Papa, you know I will not have him talked of so," cried Kate; "he went away because he chose to go. I am dreadfully sorry; and it makes me think a great deal less of the people who are staying here, not of John."

"How do you make that out?" said her father.

"Because they did not understand him better," said Kate, with flashing eyes; "they took their cue from you, papa—not from me—which shows what they are; for of course it is the lady of the house who has to be followed, not the gentleman. And he did not see anything of me, which was what he came for. I only wonder that he should have stayed a single day."

"That is complimentary to us," said her father, and then he looked her keenly in the face. "It is not much use trying to deceive me," he said. "You have quarrelled with Mitford; why don't you tell me so

at once? You have no reproach to expect from me."

"I have not quarrelled with Mr Mitford," said Kate, raising her head with an amount of indignation for which Mr Crediton was not prepared.

"No, by Jove! you need not expect any reproaches from me; a good riddance, I should be disposed to say. The fellow begins to get intolerable. Between you and me, Kate, I would almost rather the Bank had been burnt to the ground than owe all this to a man I——"

"Papa," said Kate, loftily, "the man you are speaking of is engaged to be married to me."

Upon which Mr Crediton laughed. This cynical Mephistophelian kind of laugh was not in his way, neither was it usual with him to swear by Jove; but he was aggravated, and his mind was twisted quite out of its general strain. No doubt it is very hard to have favours heaped upon you by a man whom you do not like. And then he had the feeling which embittered his dislike, that for every good service John had done him, he had repaid him with harm. As a recompense for his daughter's life, he had placed her lover in the dingy outer office—a clerk with more pretensions and less prospect of success than any of the rest. As a reward for the devotion which had saved him his property, he made his house, if not disagreeable, at least unattractive to his visitor, and now felt a certain vigorous satisfaction in the thought of having beaten him off the field. "That fellow!" he said, and flattered himself that Kate too was getting tired of him. John had not even taken his preferment gratefully and humbly, as would have been natural; but insisted upon taking possession of Kate whenever he could monopolise her society, and looked as black as night when she was not at his call. Instead of being overjoyed with the prospect of going to Fernwood at any price, he had the assurance to

resent his cool reception and to cut short his visit, as if he were on an equal or even superior footing. Mr Crediton was very glad to get rid of him, but yet he was furious at his presumption in venturing to take it upon himself to go away. It was a curious position altogether. He dared not be rude to the man who had done so much for him; everybody would have called shame on him had he attempted it; and yet he began to hate him for his services. And at the same time he had the substantial foundation of justice to rest upon, that in point of fact John Mitford was not a suitable match for Kate Crediton. It was in this mood that he accosted Kate, almost expecting to find her disposed to respond in his own vein.

"There is many a slip between the cup and the lip," he said oracularly, and left her standing where he had found her, almost diverted from her own thoughts by indignation and that healthful impulse of opposition which springs so naturally in the young human breast. "There shall be no slips in John's cup," she said to herself, with a certain fury, as she turned away, not thinking much of the unity of the metaphor. No, nothing should interfere with John's happiness; at least nothing should permanently interfere with it. The course of true love should certainly be made to run smooth for him, and everything should go right—at the last. That, of course, was all that was necessary—the most severe critic could not demand more than a happy conclusion. "Papa is very, very much mistaken if he thinks he can make me a traitor to John," Kate said within herself, indignant, and hurried off to put on her habit, and went out to ride with a countenance severe in conscious virtue. She was pleased that it was Fred Huntley who kept most closely by her side all the way. For one thing, he rode very well, which

is always a recommendation ; and then she felt that she could speak to him of the subject which was most in her thoughts. It was true that she had almost quarrelled with her lover on Fred's account, and that there had been a moment when her mind was full of the thought that her choice must lie between the two. But Kate forgot these warnings in the impulse of the moment, and in her longing for confidential communion with somebody who was interested in John.

"Papa has been making himself so disagreeable to-day," she said. "No, I know I have not much to complain of in that way ; generally he is very good ; but this morning—though perhaps I ought not to say anything about it," Kate concluded with a sigh.

"It is a way our fathers have," said Fred, "though they ought to know better at their time of life ; but Mr Crediton is a model in his way—small blame to him when he has only to deal with—"

"Me," said Kate ; "please don't pay me any compliments ; we don't really like them, you know, though we have to pretend to. I know I am sometimes very aggravating ; but if there is any good in a girl at all, she must stand up for anybody who—who is fond of her : don't you think so, Mr Huntley ? What could any one think of her if she had not the heart to do that ?"

"I am afraid I don't quite follow," said Fred ; "to stand up for everybody who is fond of her ! but in that case your life would be a series of standings-up for somebody or other—and one might have too much of that."

"There you go again," said Kate ; "another compliment ! when that is not in the least what I want. I want backing up myself. I want—advice."

"Indeed, indeed," said Fred. "I am quite ready to give any quantity of backing up—on the terms you have just mentioned ; or—advice."

"Well," said Kate, with a certain

softness in her tone—she could not help being slightly caressing to anybody she talked confidentially with—"you know we have been friends almost all our lives ; at least I was a very small little girl when I first knew you ; we used to call you Fred in those days—Minnie and Lizzie and I—"

"Minnie and Lizzie call me Fred still," said her companion, dryly ; and he brought his horse very close, almost too close, to her side.

"Of course, they are your sisters," said Kate ; "but that was not what I meant. I meant that it was natural I should talk to you. I have not got any brother to advise me, and papa has been so disagreeable ; and then, besides knowing me so well, you are quite intimate—with—poor John."

"Do you know," said Fred, with apparent hesitation, "I meant to have spoken to you on that subject. I fear Mitford does not like it. I don't blame him. If I had been as fortunate as he is—pardon the supposition—I don't think I should have liked you—I mean the lady—to talk to any other man of me."

Kate did not answer for some minutes. She went along very slowly, her head and her horse's drooping in harmony ; and then she suddenly roused herself as they came to a level stretch of turf, and with a little wave of her hand went off at full speed. Such abrupt changes were familiar to all her friends, but Fred had a feeling that the caprice for once was policy, and that she wanted time to recover herself, and make up her mind what kind of answer she would give. Perhaps she had another notion too, and had half hoped to shake off her attendant, and pick up some one else who would not tempt her into paths so difficult. However that might be, the fact was that she did not shake Fred off, but found him at her side when she drew rein and breath a good way ahead of the rest of the party.

"That was sudden," he said, with a smile, stopping as she did, and timing all his movements to hers with a deference that half flattered, half annoyed her. And Kate was silent again. Her spirit failed at this emergency—or else, which was more likely, she had not made up her mind that it was an emergency, or that now was the moment when any decision must be made.

"I don't understand why you should feel like that," she said, all at once. "It is natural to talk about people one—cares for; and who should one talk of them to but their friends? I told you papa had been dreadfully disagreeable all this time—to *him*; I am sure I can't think why—unless it is to make me unhappy; and I am—whenever I think of it," Kate added, with a candour of which she herself was unaware.

"I think I can understand quite well why," said Fred. "It is natural enough. I daresay he hates every fellow that ventures to look at you; and as for a man who hopes to take you from him altogether—I don't see how the best of Christians could be expected to stand that."

"Oh, nonsense," said Kate. "All the books say that our fathers and mothers are only too glad to get rid of us. I don't think, however, it would be true to say that of papa. He would be very lonely. But in that case, don't you think the thing would be to make very good friends with—poor John?"

Fred shook his head with every appearance of profound gravity and deliberation. "I do not think my virtue would be equal to such an exertion," he said, with great seriousness, "if I were your papa."

"You are very absurd," said Kate, laughing; "as if you could be my papa! Yes, indeed, it is easy to laugh; but if you had as much on your mind as I have, Mr Tuntley——"

"You said you used to call me red."

"That was only with your sisters," said Kate. "We are too old for that now; and, besides, if you were my real friend, and felt for me, you would not talk nonsense when I tell you how much I have on my mind."

"Am I talking nonsense?" said Fred; and just then, as ill luck would have it, their companions overtook them and interrupted the conversation, just, Kate said to herself, as it began to be interesting. And she had not really been able to obtain any advice from this old friend of her own and of John's, who was, she reflected, of all people the right one to consult. John had been impatient about it, but of course it was simply because John did not know. *He* thought Fred was intruding between them, attempting to take his own place, which was, oh, such folly! Fred of all men! who never even *looks* at me! said Kate. And then her conscience smote her a little, for Fred had surely looked at her, even this very day, more perhaps than John would have approved of. However, he was perfectly innocent, he was a man who never had been fond of any girl—who was a fellow of a college, and that sort of thing. No recollection of the moment when they had both stood by her in the Fanshawe garden, and she had felt herself driven, as it were, to make a choice between them, came back to Kate's mind now. She wanted to talk about the circumstances and discuss the matter with somebody; and Fred, who was John's friend, was the first who came in her way. This was the innocent, natural explanation,—most natural, most innocent; and how odd, how strange, how unkind it was of John to have objected to it! Though she would not really have vexed John for the world, yet somehow his unreasonable dislike to Fred rather stimulated than prevented her from seeking Fred's advice. Why should she give in to an injustice? And surely in such a matter it was she who must know best.

As for Fred Huntley, there was a curious combat going on within him which he concealed skilfully from everybody, and even laboriously from himself. He pretended not to be aware of the little internal controversy. When his heart gave him a little tug and intimation that he was John Mitford's friend, and ought to guard his interests, he acquiesced without allowing that any question on the matter was possible. Of course he was John's friend—of course he would stand by him; and he only saw with the tail of his eye, and took no notice of, the little imp which in a corner of his mind was giging at this conscientious resolution. And then he said to himself how pretty Kate Crediton looked to-day, when she suddenly woke out of her reverie, and gathered up her reins and went off like a wild creature, her horse and she one being, over the level turf. He could not but allow it was very odd that he had never remarked it before. He supposed she must have been as pretty all these years, when he had seen her growing from summer to summer into fuller bloom. But the fact was that he had never taken any notice of her until now; and he did not know how to explain it. But even while the thought passed through his mind, it appeared to Fred as if the little demon, whom he could just perceive with the tail of the eye of his mind, so to speak, made a grimace at him, as much as to say,

I know the reason why. Impertinent little imp! Fred turned and looked himself full in the face, as it were, and there was no demon visible. It was only to be seen with the tail of his eye, when his immediate attention was fixed on other things.

And thus the day passed on at Fernwood, with the ride and the talk; and at night the great dinner, which was like a picture, with its heaps of flowers on the table, and pretty toilettes and pretty faces round it—a long day for those who had no particular interest, and a short day for those who were better occupied. Lady Winton, who had known Mrs Mitford when she was a girl, yawned over her dressing, and told her confidential maid drearily that she could not think why she had come, and wished she might go, except that the next place would be just as bad. But Fred felt in his calm veins a little thrill of excitement, as of a man setting forth in an unknown country, and found Fernwood much more interesting than he had ever done before. "They have always such nice people—Lady Winton for one," he said to the man who sat next him after dinner; for Lady Winton was a very clever woman, and rather noted in society. Such was the fashion of life at Fernwood, when John sat down in the shadow of his mother's lamp at Fanshawe Regis, and did his best to make the evening cheerful for her, for the first time for three months.

CHAPTER XXI.

The conversation above recorded was, it may be supposed, very far from being the last on so tempting a subject. In short, the two who had thus a topic to themselves did with it what two people invariably do with a private occasion for talk,—produced it perpetually, had little snatches of discussion over it, which were broken off as soon as any

stranger appeared, and gradually got into a confidential and mysterious intimacy. Kate, to do her justice, had no such intention. None of the girls about her knew John sufficiently well to discuss him. They had seen him but for these two days, when he had been *distract*, preoccupied, and suffering; and indeed her friends did not ad-

mire her choice, and Madeline Winton, who was her chief intimate, had not hesitated to say so. "Of course I don't doubt Mr Mitford is very nice," had been Miss Winton's deliverance; "but if you really ask my *opinion*, Kate, I must say he did not captivate me." "I did not want him to captivate you," Kate had answered, with some heat. But nevertheless it is discouraging to have your confidences about your betrothed thus summarily checked. And on the whole, perhaps, it was more piquant to have Fred Huntley for a confidant than Madeline Winton. He never snubbed her. To be sure, with him it was not possible to indulge in very much enthusiasm over the excellences of the beloved; but that was not in any case Kate's way; and the matter, without doubt, was full of difficulties: how to overcome Mr Crediton's passive but unflinching resistance—how to bring the father and the lover to something like an understanding of each other—how to satisfy John and smooth down his asperities and make him content with his position. "It is not that he is discontented," Kate said, with an anxious pucker on her brow, on one of those evenings when Fred had placed a chair for her just at the corner of the boudoir, where she could see all that was going on in the great drawing-room, and be able to interpose should amusements flag. John would never have thought of such a clever contrivance, which kept her mind easy about her guests, and yet left her a little freedom for herself. "It is not that he is discontented," she repeated; "I hope he is too fond of me for that—but—"

"I don't understand how such a word as discontent could be spoken in the same breath with his name," said Fred—"a lucky fellow! No, surely it cannot be that."

"I told you it was not discontent," Kate said, almost sharply; "and as for lucky and all that, you always make me angry with your

nonsense—when we are talking gravely of a subject which is of so much importance; at least it is of great importance to me."

"I think you might know by this time," said Fred, with soft reproach, "that everything that concerns you is important to me."

She looked up at him with that soft glow of gratitude and thanks in her eyes which had subdued John, and half extended to him the tips of her fingers. "Yes, indeed," she said, "you are very, very kind. I don't know why I talk to you like this. I can't talk so to anybody else. And I do so want some one to feel for me. Is it very selfish? I am afraid it is."

"If it is selfish, I hope you will always be selfish," said Fred, with a fervour which was out of place, considering all things, and yet was natural enough; and though he could not kiss the finger-tips with so many eyes looking on, he squeezed them furtively in the shadow of her dress. And then for one moment they looked at each other and felt they were going wrong. To Fred, I am afraid, the feeling was not new, nor so painful as it ought to have been; but it sent the blood pulsing suddenly with a curious thrill up to Kate's very hair, startling her as if she had received an electric shock. And then next moment she said to herself, "Nonsense! it is only Fred; he is fond of me as if he were my brother. And how nice it would be to have a brother!" she added unconsciously, with a half-uttered sigh.

"Did you speak?" said Fred.

"No; I was only thinking how nice it would be—if you were my real brother," said Kate. "How I wish you were my brother! You have always been so kind; and then you would settle it all for me, and everything would come right. It would have been so nice for papa too to have had a son like you. He would not have minded losing me so much; and he would have been so proud of your first class and all

that. What a nice arrangement it would have been altogether!" she ran on, beginning to see a little fun in the suggestion, which even in her present anxious state was sweet to her. "I wonder, you know—I don't mean to be wicked, but I do wonder—why Providence shouldn't think of such things. It would have been so very, very nice both for me and for papa!"

To this Fred made no reply: he even looked a little glum, if the truth must be told, and wondered, after all, was she laughing at him as well as at the rest of the world? and the general company, as it happened, wanted a little stirring up, just at that particular moment, and Kate had darted off before he was aware, and was here and there among her guests looking as if vexation of any kind had never come near her. Fred asked himself, did she mean what she said—was she really moved by the difficulties that lay in John Mitford's way, or did she care anything about John Mitford? and what was still more important, what did she mean about himself?—did she mean anything?—was she playing with him as a cat plays with a mouse? or was it all real for the moment—her anxieties, her friendship, all her winning ways?—for they were winning ways, though he did not feel sure what faith was to be put in them; and Fred felt a certain pleasant weakness about his heart at the very thought of her—though she was not his but another man's Kate, and though he had no desire to be her brother. The magic had worked so upon him that he kept still in that corner waiting and wondering whether she would come back, and more satisfied with that absurd occupation than with the ordinary intercourse of society, which he might have had, had he chosen. There were various men within reach with whom he could have talked pleasantly enough in other circumstances; and there were women whom he liked—Lady Winton, for

instance—who was very clever, and a great friend of Fred's. Yet instead of consoling himself with any of these resources, he sat in his corner, going over and over the foolish little conversation which had just passed, watching Kate's movements, and wondering if she would come back. The time was—and that not so very long ago—when he would have thought Lady Winton's company worth twenty of Kate Crediton's; though Lady Winton was as old as his mother, and as free from any thought of flirting with her son's friend. But something had suddenly made the very idea of Kate Crediton much more captivating than her ladyship's wit and wisdom. What was it? Is it quite fair to Mitford? Fred even asked himself faintly, though he gave himself no answer. At the last, however, his patience was rewarded. Kate came back after a long interval, after she had suggested "a little music," and had herself sung, and successfully started the performances of the evening. She came back to Fred, as she had never gone back to John, —partly, perhaps, because Fred was not much to her, and John was a great deal,—although by this time the confidential intercourse between Fred and herself had begun to catch the general eye. But nevertheless she came back, and slid into the easy-chair again, and threw herself back, and gave herself up to enjoyment of the music. "This is so sweet. Please don't talk to me—any one," she said, audibly. And Fred did not talk; but he sat half behind her, half concealed by her chair and dress, and felt a curious beatitude steal over him. Why? But he could not tell, and he did not ask;—he felt it, that was all.

"Do you know," Kate said, with a certain abruptness, in the middle of a bar, "that I think everything might come right, Mr Huntley, if you would really use your influence; if you would represent to papa how good he is; and if you would only be patient with *him*, and show him

how much better things might be. You men are so queer. If it were me, I would put on any look, it would not matter. Could there be anything wrong in putting on a look just for a little while, when it might be so useful with papa? Any girl would do it naturally," Kate continued, in a slightly aggrieved tone. "I know you men are honest, and superior, and all that; but when one has not a bad motive, it can't be any harm to make-believe a little, for so short a time."

"I think I could make-believe as much and as long as you liked," said Fred, "if you would condescend to ask me."

"Everybody does it—a little—in ordinary society," said Kate. "Of course we all smile and say things we don't mean. And wouldn't it be all the more innocent if one had a good motive? You men are so stiff and so strange. You can put on looks easily enough when it is for your own ends; and then, when one wants you just to be a little prudent——"

"Happy Mitford!" said Fred. "I should stand on my head, if you took the trouble to ask me."

"That is not the question," said Kate, giving her pretty head a little shake, as if to shake off the suspicion of a blush which had come against her will; "why should I ask you to stand on your head? but it might be of so much use to us, if John could make up his mind to conciliate poor papa."

"I see the difference," said Fred, drawing back, with not unnatural bitterness. "Pardon me, Miss Crediton, for thinking of my own readiness to obey you, when you were thinking of something so much more important."

"Now you are vexed," said Kate, turning to him with her natural sweetness. "What have I done? I am sure I did not mean to vex you. I was only thinking of—poor John."

Fred was silent. He had almost betrayed himself, and it was hard

to make any reply. He swallowed his vexation as he best could, and represented to himself that he had no right to be vexed. Of course it was John she was thinking of. He gave a sudden glance back on John's past life, making a rapid comparison. He had not been so successful, nor had he distinguished himself, as Fred had done. The good things had hitherto been his, and not John Mitford's. He had outstripped the other in the race again and again; and now for the first time here was a race which had not been to the swift. That fellow! he said to himself, as Mr Crediton had done; though even in saying so he was aware that he was unjust. And, to be sure, he had known that John was more interesting to Kate than he was; yet he felt it hard. He drew back a little, and bit his lip, and twisted his thumbs, and looked black in spite of himself.

"Don't, please!" said Kate, carried away by her desire of smoothing things down and making everybody comfortable. "I have nearly quarrelled with papa. Don't you quarrel with me too."

"I quarrel with you!" cried Fred, leaning forward once more, and gazing at her with eyes that made Kate quake; and then he paused and added, in restrained tones that had a thrill of passion in them, "Do anything with me you like. I will try not to shrink from anything you want me to do. But Kate, Kate, don't forget I am a man—as well as John."

It was a great relief to Kate that Lady Winton came up at that moment and took a seat near her, and put an effectual stop to any more whispering. Perhaps it would be nonsense to say that she was very much surprised by this little outbreak of feeling. It is common to admire and wonder at the unfathomableness of women; and, like most other common and popular ideas, it is great nonsense; for women are no more mysterious to men than men are to women, and both are equally

incomprehensible. But perhaps the sentiments of a young woman in respect to the man who pays court to her, are really as curious things as are to be found within the range of humanity. The girl has no intention to be cruel—is no coquette—and would be astonished beyond measure if she could fully realise what she is herself doing. And yet there is a curiosity, an interest, in admiration for itself—in love (still more) for itself—which draw her on unawares. It requires a strong mind, or an insensible heart, not to be interested in this investigation unawares, and sometimes to the point of cruelty. When she knows what she is about, of course a good girl will stop short, and do what she can to show the infatuated one “some discourtesy,” as Sir Lancelot was bidden do to Elaine; but there are some women, like Lancelot, who cannot be discourteous, whatever is the cost; and with a mixture of awe, and wonder, and poignant gratification which is half pain, the woman looks on while that costly offering is made to her. It is cruel, and yet it is not meant to be cruel. Such were Kate’s feelings now. Was it possible that Fred Huntley could be coming to the point of loving her—the collected, cool, composed being that he was? What kind of love would his be? How would it move him? Would it be true love, or only a pretence at it? These questions filled her with a curiosity and desire to carry on the experiment, which were too strong to be resisted. She was glad of Lady Winton’s approach, because when it comes to plain speaking, it is difficult to pursue this subtle inquiry without compromising one’s self. But she turned half round and gave him a wondering, anxious look. You poor, dear fellow! what can you mean? was what the look said; and it was not the kind of glance which discourages a lover either secret or avowed. And then she turned to Lady Winton, who had

established herself at Kate’s other side.

“I have scarcely seen you all day,” she said. “Madeline told me you were too tired to talk, and that it was best to leave you alone.”

“That was very true,” said Lady Winton, “but I am better now, and I have something to say to you before I go away. Mr Huntley, will you fetch me my fan, which I have left on the piano? Thanks. Now we have got rid of him, my dear, I can say what I have to say.”

“But probably he will come back,” said Kate, with a thrill of fear.

“I don’t think he will. Fred Huntley has a great deal of sense. When I send him off with a commission like that, of course he knows we don’t want him here; and I am so glad he is gone, Kate, for it was to speak of him I came.”

“To speak of—him!”

“Yes, indeed,” said Lady Winton. “Tell me frankly, Kate, as one woman to another, which is it to be?”

“Which is what to be?—I don’t understand you,” said Kate, flushing crimson; “which of which? Lady Winton, I can’t even guess what you mean.”

“Oh yes, you can,” said her new adviser. “My dear, it is not permitted by our laws to have two husbands, and that makes two lovers very dangerous—I always warn a girl against it. You think, perhaps, there is no harm, and that one of them will be wise enough not to go too far; but they will go too far, those silly men—and when they don’t, we despise them, my dear,” said the experienced woman. “A woman may shilly-shally, and hold off and on, and make an entertainment of it—but when a man is capable of that sort of thing he is not worth a thought; and so I ask, which is it to be?”

It will be seen from this that Lady Winton, like so many clever

women of her age, was deeply learned in all the questions that can arise between men and women. She had studied the matter at first hand of course, in her youth; and though she had never been a flirt, she had not been absolutely devoid of opportunity for study, even in her maturer years, when the faculty of observation was enlarged, and ripe judgment had come; and accordingly she spoke with authority, as one fully competent to fathom and realise the question which she thus fearlessly opened. As for Kate, she changed colour a great many times while she was being addressed, but her courage did not fail.

"Mr Huntley is my friend," she said, facing her accuser bravely: "as for which it is to be, I introduced Mr Mitford to you, Lady Winton——"

"Yes, my dear, and that is what makes me ask; and a very nice young fellow, I am sure—a genuine, reliable sort of young man, Kate——"

"Oh, isn't he?" cried, that changeable personage, with eyes glowing and sparkling; "dear Lady Winton, you always understand—that is just what he is—one could trust him with anything and he would never fail."

"You strange girl," said Lady Winton, "what do you mean? Why, you are *in earnest*! and yet you sit and talk with Fred Huntley a whole evening in a corner, and do everything you can to break the other poor fellow's heart."

"The other poor fellow is not here," said Kate, with a half-alarmed glance round her. If it came to that, she felt that after all she would not have liked John to have watched her interview with her friend and his: and then she perceived that she had betrayed herself, and coloured high, recollecting

that she was under keen feminine inspection which missed nothing.

"Don't trust to that," said Lady Winton; "you may be sure there is somebody here who will let him know. I don't say much about Fred Huntley's heart, for he is very well able to take care of that; but, Kate, for heaven's sake, mind what you are about! Don't get into the habit of encouraging one man because another is absent and will not know. Everybody knows everything, my dear; there is no such thing as a secret; you forget there are more than a dozen pairs of eyes in this very room."

"Lady Winton," said Kate, "I am not afraid of any one seeing what I do. I hope I have not done anything wrong; and as for Mr Mitford, I know him and he knows me."

"Well, well—let us hope so," said Lady Winton, with a prolonged shake of her head; "and I hope he is more philosophical than I gave him credit for; I should not have said it was his strong point. But, however, as you are so very sure, my dear——"

"Perfectly sure," said Kate, with dignity; and the moment she had said it, would have liked to throw her arms round her monitor's neck and have a good cry; but that was quite impossible in the circumstances; and Fred Huntley from afar seeing the two ladies draw imperceptibly apart, and seeing their conversation had come to an end, approached with the fan, and took up his position in front of them, and managed to bring about a general conversation. He did it very skilfully, and contrived to cover Kate's annoyance and smooth her down, and restore her to self-command; and that night Kate was not only friendly but grateful to him, which was a further step in the downward way.

CHAPTER XXII.

Fred Huntley was a man of considerable ingenuity as well as coolness of intellect; and it was impossible that he could remain long unconscious of what he was doing, or take any but the first steps in any path without a clear perception of whither it led. And accordingly, before he had reached this point he had become fully aware of the situation, and had contemplated it from every possible point of view. No feeling of treachery to John weighed upon him when he thought it fully over. He had not been confided in by Kate's accepted lover, nor appealed to, nor put upon his honour in the matter; and John was not even a very intimate friend that he should give in to him; nor did it occur to him to stifle the dawning love in his own heart, and withdraw from the field, even for Kate's sake, to leave her tranquil to the enjoyment of her first love. Such an idea was not in Fred's way. To secure his own will and his own happiness was naturally the first thing in his estimation, and he had no compunctions about his rival. There seemed to him no possible reason why he should sacrifice himself, and leave the field clear to John. And then there were so many aspects in which to consider the matter. It would be much better for her, Fred felt, to marry himself. He could make appropriate settlements upon her; he could maintain her in that position to which she had been accustomed; he could give her everything that a rich man's daughter or rich man's wife could desire. His blood, perhaps, might not be so good as John Mitford's blood, if you entered into so fine a question; but he was heir to his father's money, if not to much that was more ethereal. And money tells with everybody, Fred thought; it would tell with Kate, though perhaps she did not think so. Of all

people in the world was not she the last who could consent to come down from her luxurious state, and be the wife of a poor man, with next to no servants, no horses, no carriage, and nothing but love to make up to her for a thousand wants? Fred Huntley was in love himself, and indeed it was love that was the origin of all these deliberations; and yet he scoffed at love as a compensation. He did not understand how it could reconcile Kate to the difference between this luxurious house of her father's and the poor little dwelling which was all Mitford was likely to be able to offer her; and when, on the other hand, he represented to himself what it would be in his power to do—how he could surround her with as good or better than anything she now possessed—his heart swelled with a sensation which was partly mean and partly lofty. It was so far fine that there was in it a natural gush of that feeling which would dedicate everything to the one beloved; and it was mean because he calculated on his power of vanquishing his rival, and tempting Kate's affections in this way. He could give her a house nearly as good as her father's to start with, and eventually better than her father's; he could bestow upon her everything that heart could desire; he could take her everywhere she would care to go—withhold no pleasure from her; whereas the best that Mitford could do would be to depend on her father's favour, and climb upwards by that means, without one thing to offer to her which he could call his own. By dint of thinking, Fred got himself to believe that it was really an unprincipled thing on John's part to seek her at all, and that any man would do a good deed who should deliver her from his hands. He had reached to this point by the next evening after the

one whose events we have just recorded. Kate had not ridden out that day; she had been little visible to any one, and Fred had not more than a distant glimpse of her at the breakfast-table and in the twilight over the tea, which called together most of the party. Madeline Winton and her mother had gone away that morning; and Madeline was Kate's gossip, her confidential friend, the only one with whom she could relieve her soul. She was somewhat low-spirited in the evening. Fred looked on, and saw her languid treatment of everything, and the snubs she administered to several would-be consolers. He kept apart himself with conscious skill; and yet, when he happened to be thrown absolutely in her way, was very full of attention and care for her comfort. He placed her seat just as he thought she liked it, arranged her footstool for her with the most anxious devotion, and was just retiring behind her chair when she stopped him, struck by his melancholy looks. "Are you ill, Mr Huntley?" she said, with something like solicitude; and Fred shook his head, fixing his eyes on her face.

"No," he said, "I am not ill;" and then drew a little apart, and looked down upon her with a certain pathos in his eyes.

"There is something the matter with you," said Kate.

"Well, perhaps there is; and I should have said there was something the matter with you, Miss Crediton, which is of a great deal more importance."

"Mine is easily explained," said Kate; "I have lost my friend. I am always low when Madeline goes away. We have always been such friends since we were babies. There is nobody in the world I am so intimate with. And it is so nice to have some one you can talk to and say everything that comes into your head. I am always out of spirits when she goes away."

"If the post is vacant I wish I

might apply for it," Fred said, with exaggerated humility. "I think I should make an excellent confidant. Discreet and patient and ready to sympathise, and not at all given to offering impertinent advice."

"Ah, you!" cried Kate, with a sudden glance up at him. And then she laughed, notwithstanding her depressed condition. "I wonder what Lady Winton would say?" she added merrily, but the next moment grew very red and felt confused under his eye; for what if he should try to find out what Lady Winton had said?—which, of course, he immediately attempted to do.

"Lady Winton is a great friend of mine. She would never give her vote against me," said Fred, cunningly disarming his adversary.

Upon which Kate indulged herself in another mischievous laugh. Did he but know! "She is not like you," said the girl in her temerity; "she is rather fond of giving advice."

"Yes," said Fred, growing bold. "That was what she was doing last night. Would you like me to tell you what it was about?"

"What it was about?" cried Kate in consternation, with a violent sudden blush; but of course it must be nonsense, she represented to herself, looking at him with a certain anxiety. "You never could guess, Mr Huntley; it was something quite between ourselves."

"That is very possible," he said, so gravely that her fears were quite silenced; and he added in another moment, "But I know very well what it was. It was about me."

"About you!"

"I have known Lady Winton a great many years," said Fred, steadily. "I understand her ways. When she comes and takes a man's place and sends him off for something she has left behind on purpose, he must be dull indeed if he does not know what she means. She was talking to you of me."

"It was not I that said so!" cried

Kate, who was in a great turmoil, combined of fright, confusion, and amusement. It would be such fun to hear what guesses he would make, and he was so sure not to find it out. "When you assert such a thing you must prove it," she said, her eyes dancing with fun and rash delight, and yet with a secret terror in them too.

"She was warning you," said Fred, with a long-drawn breath, in which there was some real and a good deal of counterfeit excitement, "not to trifle with me. She was telling you, that though I did not show many signs of feeling, I was still a man like other men, and had a heart—"

"Fancy Lady Winton saying all that," cried Kate, with a tremulous laugh of agitation. "What a lively imagination you have—and about you!"

"But she might have said it with great justice," said Fred, very gravely and steadily, "and about me."

Here was a situation! To have a man speaking to you in your own drawing-room in full sight of a score of people, and as good as telling you what men tell in all sorts of covert and secret places, with faltering voice and beating heart. Fred was perfectly steady and still; his voice was a trifle graver than usual—perhaps it might have been called sad; his eyes were fixed upon her with a serious, anxious look; there was no air of jest, no levity, but an aspect of fact which terrified and startled her. Kate fairly broke down under this strange and unexpected test. She gave him a frightened look, and put up her fan to hide her face. What was she to say?

"Please, Mr Huntley," she faltered, "this is not the kind of subject to make jokes about."

"Do I look like a man who is joking?" he asked. "I do not complain; I have not a word to say. I suppose I have brought it upon myself, buying the delight

of your society at any price I could get it for—even the dearest. And you talk to me about another man as if I were made of stone—a man who—"

"Stop, please," she said, faintly. "I may have been wrong. I never thought—but please don't say anything of him, whatever you may say to me."

"You are more afraid of a word breathed against him than of breaking my heart," said Fred, with some real emotion; and Kate sat still, thunderstruck, taking shelter behind her fan, feeling that every one was looking at her, and that her very ears were burning and tingling. Was he making love to her? she asked herself. Had he any intention of contesting John's supremacy? or was it a mere remonstrance, a complaint that meant nothing, an outcry of wounded pride and nothing more?

"Mr Huntley," she said, softly, "if I have given you any pain, I am very sorry. I never meant it. You were so kind, I did not think I was doing wrong. Please forgive me; if there is any harm done it is not with my will."

"Do you think that mends matters?" said Fred, with now a little indignation mingling in his sadness. "If I put it into plain English, this is what it means:—I was something so insignificant to you, taken up as you were with your own love, that it never occurred to you that I might suffer. You never thought of me at all. If you had said you had meant it, and had taken the trouble to make me miserable, that would have been a little better; at least it would not have been contempt."

And he turned away from her and sat down at a little table near, and covered his face with his hand. What would everybody think? was Kate's first thought. Did he mean to hold her up to everybody's notice, to demonstrate that she had used him badly? She bore it for a moment or two in her bewilderment,

and then stretched across and touched him lightly with her fan. "Mr Huntley, there are a great many people in the room," she said. "If we were alone you might reproach me; but surely we need not let these people know—and papa! Mr Huntley, you know very well it was not contempt. Won't you forgive me—when I ask your pardon with all my heart!"

"Forgive you!" cried Fred; and he raised his head and turned to her, though he did not raise his eyes. "You cannot think it is forgiveness that is wanted—that is mockery."

"Please don't say so! I would not mock you for all the world. Oh, Mr Huntley, if it is not forgiveness, what is it?" cried Kate.

And then he looked at her with eyes full of reproach, and a certain appeal, while she met his look with incipient tears, with her child's gaze of wonder, and sorrow, and eloquent deprecation. "Please forgive me," she said, in a whisper. She even advanced her hand to him by instinct, with a shy half-conscious movement, stopping short out of regard for the many pairs of eyes in the room, not for any other cause. "I am so very, very sorry," she said, and the water shone in her blue eyes like dew on flowers. Fred, though he was not emotional, was more deeply moved than he had yet been. Throughout all this strange interview, though he meant every word he said, he had yet been more or less playing a part. But now her ingenuous look overcame him. Something of the imbecility of tenderness came into his eyes. He made a little clutch at the finger-tips which had been held out to him, and would have kissed them before everybody, had not Kate given him a warning look, and blushed, and quickly drawn the half-offered hand away. She would not have drawn it away had they been alone. Would she have heard him more patiently, given him a still kinder response? Fred could

not tell, but yet he felt that his first effort had not been made in vain.

It was Mr Crediton himself who interrupted this *tête-à-tête*. He came up to them with a look which might have been mere curiosity, and might have been displeasure. "Kate," he said, gravely, "it seems to me you are neglecting your guests. Instead of staying in this favourite corner of yours, suppose you go and look after these young ladies a little. Mr Huntley will excuse you, I am sure."

"I am so lazy, I am out of spirits; and so is Mr Huntley; we have been condoling with each other," said Kate; but she got up, as she spoke, with her usual sweet alacrity, not sorry, if truth were told, to escape from this unexpected difficulty. "Keep my seat for me, papa, till I come back," she said, with her soft little laugh. Mr Crediton did as he was told—he placed himself in her chair, and turned round to Fred and looked at him. While she tripped away to the other girls to resume her interrupted duties, her father and her new lover confronted each other, and cautiously investigated what the new danger was.

"My dear Huntley," said the elder man, "I am sure your meaning is the most friendly in the world; but my daughter is very young, and she is engaged to be married; and, on the whole, I think it would be better that you did not appropriate her so much. Kate ought to know better, but she is very light-hearted, and fond of being amused."

"I don't think I have been very amusing to-night," said Fred. "Thanks, sir, for your frankness; but I am going away to-morrow, and I may claim a little indulgence, perhaps, for my last night."

"Going away to-morrow!" said Mr Crediton, with surprise.

"Yes, I have no choice. Shall I say it is sudden business—a telegram from Oxford—a summons home? or shall I tell you the real

reason, Mr Crediton?" cried Fred, with emotion. "You have always been very good to me."

Mr Crediton was startled, notwithstanding his habitual composure. He looked keenly at the young man, and saw what few people had ever seen—the signs of strong and highly-wrought feeling in Fred Huntley's face; and the sight was a great surprise to him. He had thought the two had been amusing themselves with a flirtation, a thing he did not approve of; but this must surely have gone beyond a flirtation. "If you have anything to say to me, come to the library after they have gone to bed," he said. Fred answered by a nod of assent, and the two separated without another word. Nor did Kate see the new claimant to her regard any more that night. He had disappeared when she had time to look round her, and recall the agitating interview which had broken the monotony of the even-

ing. It came to her mind when she was talking, returning again and again amid the nothings of ordinary conversation. How strange it all was, how exciting! what a curious episode in the heaviest evening! And what did he, what could he, mean? And what would John think? And was it possible that Fred Huntley could feel like that—Fred, that man of the world? She was confused, bewildered, flattered, pleased, and sorry. It was a new sensation, and thrilled her through and through when she was rather in want of something to rouse her up a little. And she was so sorry for him! She almost hoped he would spring up from some corner, and be chidden and comforted, and made more miserable by the soft look of compassion she would give him—the "Pardon me!" which she meant to say; but Fred made no further appearance, and the Pardon me! was not said that night.

CHAPTER XXIII.

It puzzled Kate very much next morning to find that Huntley had not reappeared. It was not in the nature of things that she could avoid thinking about him, and wondering over and over again what he could mean,—whether he was mystifying her—but that was impossible; or if it was really, actually true? The question came back to her mind again and again, thrusting itself into all her thoughts. Could it be true? And the fact was that she went down-stairs a little earlier than usual, with a great curiosity in her mind as to how Fred would look, and whether she should see any traces in his face of last night's agitation. When she had taken this trouble, it may be supposed that it was hard upon her to find Fred absent; and she "did not like"—a new expression in Kate's vocabulary—to ask what had become of him. She caught

herself looking at the door anxiously every time it opened, but he did not come. Some one at last relieved her anxiety by asking the point-blank question, "What has become of Huntley? has he gone away?" It was an idea which never had occurred to Kate. She looked up in blank dismay at the suggestion, and met her father's eye fully fixed upon her, and trembled, and felt that in two minutes more she must cry—not for Fred, but because he was decidedly an exciting new plaything, and he had gone away.

"Yes, he has gone away," said Mr Crediton, "this morning, before some of us were out of bed. I have his farewells to make. He did not know it would be necessary for him to go when he left us last night."

"I hope there is nothing the matter at Westbrook," said one of Fred's intimates; but Kate did not

say a word. The room swam round her for one moment. Gone away! Was it so serious as that, then? The self-possessed Fred, had matters been so grave with him that flight was his only refuge? She was so startled that she did not know what to think. She was sorry, and surprised, and fluttered, and excited, all in a breath. She did not pay any attention to the conversation for some minutes, though she was sufficiently mistress of herself to take the usual part in it, and to go on dispensing cups of tea. Gone away! It was very fine, very honourable, very provoking of him. She had meant to bring him down to his level very kindly and skilfully, and cure him of all hopes, while still she kept him bound in a certain friendly chain. And now he had cut it all short, and taken the matter into his own hands. It cannot be denied that Kate was a little vexed at the moment. No doubt, if she had been left alone she would have got over it in the course of the day, and recovered her composure, and thought no more of Fred Huntley than she had done two days ago; but she was not destined to be left to herself. The first thing that happened was that Mr Crediton remained in the breakfast-room till everybody was gone, and called her to him. The most indulgent of fathers was looking somewhat stern, which was a thing of itself which utterly puzzled as well as dismayed the girl whom he had scarcely ever thwarted in the whole course of her life.

"Kate," he said, "you took no notice when I said Fred Huntley had gone away, so I suppose he told you why it was."

"He never said a word to me of going away, papa," faltered Kate.

"But you know the cause? and I hope it will be a warning to you," said Mr Crediton. "I have seen this going on for some days, and I meant to have spoken to you. A girl in your position has no right

to distinguish a man as you did poor Fred."

"But, dear papa," cried Kate, feeling very penitent yet very much flattered—as if somebody had paid her a very nice compliment, she said afterwards—"you cannot think it was my fault; I only talked to him like the rest. If I talked to him a little more, it was about—Mr Mitford. And he knew all the time. How was I to suppose it could come to any harm?"

"Don't let me hear of any other man being taken in by your confounded confidences—about Mr Mitford," said her father, with an amount of rudeness and contemptuous impatience, such as perhaps had never been shown to Kate before in all her life.

"Papa!" she cried, indignant, drawing herself up; but Mr Crediton only said "Pshaw!" and went off and left her standing by herself, not knowing whether to cry or to be very angry, in the great empty room. He was wroth, and he was disposed rather to heighten than to subdue the expression of it. He wanted her to feel the full weight of his displeasure, rather a little more than less. For Fred Huntley would have suited him well enough for a son-in-law, if it was necessary to have such an article. He had distinguished himself already, and was likely still more to distinguish himself. He was thought of by the borough authorities as the new Member for Camelford. He was very well off, and could do everything that was right and meet in the way of providing for his bride. He was in her own sphere. "Confound that Mitford!" Mr Crediton said to himself as he left his daughter. It was bad enough to contemplate the possibility of ever resigning his child to John's keeping; but to throw aside a man he liked for him, exaggerated the offence. He went out, kicking Kate's favourite Skye terrier on his way, as angry men are apt to do. "As if it was poor Muffy that had done it!" Kate

said, with the tears springing to her eyes. When she was thus left she called her injured terrier to her, and hugged it, and had a good cry. "You did not do it, did you, Muffy?" she said. "Poor dear dog! what had you to do with it? If a man chooses to be silly, are we to be kicked for it, Muffy *mio*? Papa is a great bear, and everybody is as unkind as they can be; and oh, I am so sorry about poor Fred!"

She got over her crying, however, and her regrets, and made herself very agreeable to a great many people for the rest of the day, and petted Muffy very much, and took no notice of her father, who, poor man, had compunctions; but by the time that evening arrived, Kate began to feel that the loss of Fred was a very serious loss indeed. He had timed his departure very cleverly. If Madeline Winton had still been there, it might have been bearable; for she would have had some one to open her heart to, notwithstanding that even to Madeline she had not been able to speak of John as she had indulged herself in doing to her "friend"—John's friend; somehow that was not the title which she now thought of giving to Fred Huntley. He had suddenly sprung into individuality, and held a distinct place of his own in her mind. She found herself thinking of him all through the evening, missing him a great deal more than she had any right to miss him, wondering what he would have said about this and that, longing to have him to talk to. She sat down in the same corner where he had placed her chair for her on the previous night, and was very silent and *distracted* and abstracted, not caring what the others did or said. And as she sat in that position, so much the same, yet so very different, it was impossible to keep her mind from going over all the particulars of the conversations which had turned out so important. Poor Fred! could it be possible that he was so fond of her? he

who was not at all a tragical sort of personage, or one likely to do anything very much out of the way for love. What could he find in her to be fond of? Kate said to herself. He was not like John, who was ignorant of society. Fred Huntley had seen heaps of other girls who were very pretty and very nice; and why was it that he had set his affections upon herself, Kate, whom he could not have? It seemed such a pity, such a waste of effort. "Madeline might have had him, perhaps," she said to herself, reflecting pensively in her easy-chair, with her fan at her lips to conceal their movement. Madeline as yet had no lover, and she was very nice, and rather pretty too. And it would have been perfectly suitable, "instead of coming making a fuss over me; and he can't have *me*," Kate added always within herself, with a sigh of suffering benevolence. It was hard he could not have her when he wanted her so very much. It was hard that everybody should not have everything they wanted. And it was odd, yet not unpleasant, that he should thus insist upon throwing away his love upon herself, who could not accept it, instead of giving it to Madeline, who might have accepted. How perverse the world was! Kate reflected as she sat and mused. And she was heartily sorry to cross Fred, and felt the most affectionate sympathy for him, poor fellow! It was so nice of him to be fond of her, though she could not give him any return. And if he had stayed and talked it over, instead of running away, Kate thought of a hundred things she could have said to him, as to the unreasonableness of falling in love with herself, and the good sense of transferring his love to Madeline. Somehow she did not quite expect he would have taken her advice; but still, no doubt, she would have set it before him in a very clear light, and got him to hear reason. And then he

was very pleasant to talk to, and more amusing than anybody else at Fernwood. This feeling had never crept over her in respect to John. When he went away, she was sorry because he left her half in displeasure, and "had not enjoyed himself;" but she could not persuade herself that she had missed his company, missed a hundred things he would have said to her, as she did now. She was in reality almost relieved to be quit of the passionate eyes which followed her everywhere, and the demand which he made upon her for her society, for her very inmost self. But Fred made no such claims. Fred took what he could get, and was happy in it. He spared her trouble, and watched to see what her wants were, and was always ready to talk to her or to leave her alone, as her mood varied. Poor Fred! she sighed, feeling very, very sorry for him, with a half-tenderness of pity which young women accord only to those who are their personal victims. Perhaps she exaggerated his sufferings, as it was natural to do. She sat and mused over him all that evening with her fan half concealing her face. "My dear, I am afraid you have a headache," one of the elder ladies said to her; and Kate acquiesced with a faint little smile. "It is the weather," she said, softly; and the old lady, taking her cue, sat down beside her, and discussed the same. "The changes are the worst," she said—"the thermometer at sixty one day, and next day below the freezing-point. And then, in an English house, it is so difficult to keep cold out."

"I hope your room is warm," Kate said suddenly, remembering her hostess-ship. "You must tell me if you find it chilly. There is such a difference in some of the rooms!"

"It is according to their aspect," said the old lady; "mine is very comfortable, I assure you. It is you young ones that expose your-

selves to so many changes. If I were you, I would wrap up very warm, and keep indoors for a day or two. There is nothing like keeping in an equable temperature. I have no confidence in anything else."

"Thanks," Kate said, with a feeling of dreariness. Instead of Fred's conversation this was a poor exchange. And she grew more and more sorry for him, and more and more compassionate of herself as the evening stole on. Several of the people who interested her most had left within the last few days. There was but the moderate average of country-house visitors left; people who were not remarkable for anything—neither witty, nor pretty, nor particularly entertaining—and yet not to be complained of in any way. She did her duty to them as became Mr Crediton's daughter, and was very solicitous to know that they were comfortable and had what they liked; but she missed Madeline, she missed Lady Winton, she missed her acrid old godfather, who was said to be fond of nobody but Kate; and, above all, she missed Fred Huntley—poor Fred!

A week had passed, somewhat weakening this impression, when Fred returned, quite as suddenly as he went away. He was seen walking up the avenue when the party were at luncheon, and Kate's heart gave a little jump at the sight of him. "Why, there is Huntley come back again!" some one cried; but he did not make his appearance at lunch; and it was only when he came into the drawing-room before dinner that Kate had any opportunity of seeing what change had been wrought in him by the discovery of his sentiments towards herself. Fred was playing a part; but, like every other actor in life who plays his part well, had come to believe in it himself, and to feel it real. He came up to her with a certain confused but melancholy frankness.

"Miss Crediton," he said, "I am afraid you cannot like to see me, but I have come about business. I would not for the world, for any other reason, have brought what must be an annoyance upon you." And then Kate had lifted to him a pair of very sympathetic, almost tender, eyes.

"Indeed I don't know why I should not like to see you," she said, quietly. "You have always been very kind to me."

"Kind!" he had answered, turning away with a gesture of impatience, and not another word passed between them until the evening was almost over, and all opportunity past. He was so slow, indeed, to take advantage of any opportunity, that Kate felt half angry—wondering had the man quite got over it? had he ever meant anything? But at the very last, when she turned her head unthinking, all at once she found his eyes upon her, and that he was standing close by her side.

"I suppose I must not ask for my old situation," he said, softly. "I have been a fool and forfeited all my advantages because I could not win the greatest. You used to speak to me once—of the subject most interesting to yourself."

"I don't think it would be in the least interesting to you *now*, Mr Huntley," said Kate, not without a little pique in her voice.

"Ah, you don't know me," he said. "I think I could interest myself in anything that was interesting to you."

And then there was silence, in which Kate began to feel her heart beat, and wondered if this man could be an oyster, or if he could really be so inconceivably fond of her as to be thus concerned in all that concerned her happiness. It sounded like something in a romance; and yet Kate knew enough of life and society to know that romance sometimes gave but a very colourless picture of the truth.

"I hope you have heard lately,"

he went on, with a voice which was elaborately and yet not unnaturally subdued—for, as has been said, Fred had fully entered into the rôle he was playing—"and that all is going well."

Kate blushed, perhaps, more violently than she had ever blushed in her life before. If he were making this sacrifice of his feelings for her, surely it was needful for her to be true and sincere with him; and what she had to say was mortifying to her pride. She looked at him stooping over her, and tried to read his face, and asked herself, with a simplicity that is natural to the sophisticated, whether here, once for all, she had found the friend who is equal to utter self-abnegation, and of whom in books one sometimes reads. A more simple-minded girl, probably, would not have looked for so self-sacrificing a lover, but Kate had been brought up with a persuasion of her own power to sway everybody to her will. "Mr Huntley," she said, hurriedly, "I don't think I ought to speak to you on such a subject; but, indeed, I feel anxious, and I don't know what to do."

"Then do speak to me," he said, bending over her. "Do you think I care what happens to myself if I can be of use to you?"

There are sentiments of this heroic description which we would see the fallacy of at once if addressed to others, which yet seem natural spoken to ourselves. And Kate had always been so important to everybody about her. She looked up at him again, she faltered, she half turned away, and then, after all, she spoke.

"I don't know why I should tell you. I don't know what it means. I have not heard a single word from him, Mr Huntley, since he went away."

A sudden gleam of light came into Fred's eyes, but he was looking down, and she only saw a ghost of it under his lowered eyelids. "That is very strange," he said.

"Do you think he can be ill? Do you think anything can have happened?" said Kate.

"He is not ill, he is at home at Fanshawe, and his burns are getting better. I saw him yesterday," said Fred.

"At home! and he never told me. Oh, how unkind it is! It used to be every other day, and now it is nearly a fortnight. But why should you care?" cried Kate, really moved with sharp mortification, and not quite aware what she said.

"I care a great deal," he said, very low, and sighed. And Kate's heart was sore, and she was angry, and wounded, and for almost the first time in her life felt that she had a little pride in her nature. Did the other despise her to whom she had given her heart? Did he think she was not worthy even of courtesy? though other people were so far from thinking so. The tears began to spring up and flow apace in Kate's impatient heart.

NEW BOOKS.

THE art of criticism is going out of fashion—at least the popular branch of that art which has or had the office of directing general public opinion in respect to contemporary literature. Perhaps there never were so many literary newspapers, so many vehicles of popular criticism; but the art has sunk into a bandying of mutual compliments, an interchange of mutual blows, the recriminations and reprisals of a profession from which the general reader can derive no guidance, nor the young writer the least instruction. We believe we may safely say that no one at all behind the scenes, in respect to literature, ever does place the slightest reliance upon any criticism of a new book in the literary journals of the day; nor can even the experienced reader, unconnected with literature, find himself able to trust to the professional guides, who ought to discriminate for him not only what is good and bad, but what is weak and what is vigorous, in the flood of books constantly pouring upon the English public. This rule, of course, is not universal, for by times there comes a book which carries the world, critical and uncritical, by storm; and by times there appears an unknown name, neither friend nor foe, which catches the attention of some journalist at leisure, and secures an honest no-

tice and real judgment. But the distrust is so universal, that the reader does not appreciate this chance piece of fair-dealing when he meets it. So-and-so has a friend on the staff of the 'Critic,' therefore his work is reviewed at length with the most favourable comment; while What's-his-name's book, which is much better, is passed over in lordly silence. The trick is so universal, that even periodical writers who condemn it, find themselves drawn in to the pernicious habit. We have, at this present moment, under our eye, a book possessed of no real literary merit, and full of the most flagrant offences against good taste and good feeling, which by dint of this combination of mutual aid, this trades-union of literary craftsmen, has been reviewed far and wide, and attracted a degree of notice which it as little deserves as the poorest anonymous publication out of Mr Newby's or Messrs Tinsley's book-manufactories. Ourselves, impartial, just, and severe, refrain from indicating the volume in question by name, for the very same reason which has led so many others to lend it a friendly push into a position to which it has no right. The practice is universal; and it is not only intensely unfair to the public, and to the authors who may happen to have no acquaintances among

the critics of the press, but it is also intensely mortifying to those writers who have already won a certain place in general estimation, but who have the humiliation of knowing, when their books are favourably reviewed, that this is no generous and real appreciation, but a mere friendly puff from A., or B., or C., to whose private and personal regard they owe what they never might have won without that backing. C. or A. may really like, admire, and appreciate the book he reviews; but it is not for that reason that he reviews it, but because the book is written by D., or by D.'s friend, "and one must say a good word for it." Or perhaps, when the critic's preparations are all made for his work—when he is just ready to prick the bladder of fictitious fame, and replace on its proper level a foolishly-lauded performance—his editor stands before him with uplifted arm, like another Jove. "If you can say anything good of it, do so," says that awful ruler; "if not, leave it out; for F. is a very good fellow, and I don't want to vex him." But what does it matter to you, oh patient public! that F. is a good fellow? what does it matter to you that Mr A. is "nice," and Miss B. captivating? What you want is to know what the books are—if you shall like them; if they are worth sending to Mudie's for, or taking up when you are weary, or studying when you want information. All this we promise to inform you of when we take pen in hand; we pledge ourselves to run over the mass with experienced professional eye, and find you out what is best and what is worst, and to allot to the indifferent and mediocre their natural secondary place. But what we really do is, to applaud our friend's platitudes, and tell you they are full of true philosophy and insight—to present to you a pretty little commonplace story as a work of genius—to appropriate to certain writers certain kinds of comments, as the right thing to

say—and when we happen to have a real honest enmity, to fall upon our brother for whom we entertain that lively sentiment with corresponding liveliness of assault. Perhaps of all the prevailing modes of treatment in criticism this last is the most justifiable—at least it is the most human; for to have a foe, and to be able to strike a good straightforward blow at him, is an enlivening process, and generally calls forth in the most vivacious manner a critic's power. How often has the piteous cry, "If I could but go in at this book now, what a good thing I could make of it!" come to our ears! but then other considerations come in which forbid that delight—considerations totally independent of the interest of the public—that he is a good fellow, or she is a nice woman; quite valid reasons to the being who holds the pen for denying himself his fling, but not valid reasons for representing to the public that the books in question are full of sweetness and light, or any other qualities identified as excellent in the slang of the day.

We do not intend, after this preamble, to present ourselves before the public as the Honest Critic; at least if we do so, it is not with the elevated pretensions of a recent beginning, caused, we imagine, by a similar sentiment to our own, but sustained by a more perfect consciousness of that divine and perpetual certainty of being always right, which characterises Mr Matthew Arnold and his friends. We do not commence by saying, *Il n'y a que nous qui ont toujours raison*. The single profession we make is, that we shall put personal prepossessions in our pockets—will, so far as lies in human power, be deaf even to the blandishments of our editor, and callous to his threats; and will say our opinion honestly, be the book that of a friend or that of a foe, without fear or favour. At the same time, we do not pretend to erect within the genial enclosure of *Maga* any tri-

bunal of judgment in which we shall sit superior. The Christian sentiment, that one man is as good as another, or perhaps better, shall animate all our comments ; and we do not refuse to acknowledge the still higher principle, that authors, after all, when one comes to think of it, are as good as critics—that probably in some cases they know their own meaning better than we do ; and that it is worth while,—not as looking down from above, which destroys the perspective—but in friendly equality, on the same level—or even sometimes from a step lower,—to look into that meaning, and give our best endeavour to find it out.

There is something curious in the simultaneous publication of two books on the same subject,* which attracts the attention at the first glance ; especially as that subject is one of no immediate or contemporary interest, though it has a great claim, not only upon the students of art, to whom it primarily commends itself, but upon all who are interested in the study of man, of national characteristics, and of the ways of thinking and animating principles of the past. Albrecht Dürer is one of the most picturesque figures which appear out of that great, full, vigorous, yet misty Germany of the fifteenth century, in which the old and the new were in full conflict, the medieval reluctantly going out,—the modern economy defiantly, sometimes offensively, as is the nature of such invasions, breaking in. Great things were going on in his day—great men abounded around him. The highest radiance of genius which had ever been devoted to Art was illuminating Italy, and he himself in his own person was Art in Germany, a giant birth springing to its greatest in its cradle. He had corresponded with Raffael,

studied with Titian, served the great Kaiser Maximilian, knew Erasmus and Melanchthon, and, in short, held a place in the very centre of that wonderful outburst of renewed strength and vitality which the world has scarcely ever equalled. Yet with all this wide and full life about him, he was, above all things, a burgher of a petty town, bound in closest obedience to a narrow municipal corporation—living for the work which he pursued with grave steadfastness, as if it had been a trade—making money, and not apparently objecting to make merry also with his fellow-craftsmen and city friends. This curious compound of the great and the small was not rare in his time ; but yet it is very strange to us in this age, to which such a development of mingled splendour and humility is unknown. We will not assert that the English or any other public was at all eager for the story of Dürer's life. But no doubt it is one which we are ready to receive with respect, and with anticipations of interest. Who that has ever seen Nuremberg itself, and read the legend on his tombstone, and seen the tall, quaint, old house raising itself stately, yet homely, over against the Thiergartner Thor, like an unchanged antique figure among scores of other patriarchs as unchangeable as itself, could refuse to be interested in a book which should set before us the life which was going on three hundred years ago in those quaint streets ? The steep and lofty roofs that crowd together, whispering over the silent ages they have seen ; the quaint oriels and projections which glimmer at each other in the sunshine across the little stream which traverses the city ; the old castle—old beyond all counting—with the tree in its courtyard, which was a well-grown tree when Albrecht Dürer was born ; the great

* *Life, Letters, and Journal of Albrecht Dürer.* By Mrs Heaton. London : Macmillan.

Life and Works of Albrecht Dürer. By W. B. Scott. London : Longman.

noble churches with their medieval monuments, and bare, chill, modern Protestantism,—everything speaks to us of a time and a history which have departed. The traveller is without imagination, indeed, who does not conjure up the fifteenth century unawares as he wanders about the stony streets ;—and very destitute of all religious and philosophical tendencies if he can watch and contrast the chilled and scanty gatherings of the children of the Reformation in the vast old cathedral built for another form of worship, and the eager and devout multitude in the Frauenkirche, without feeling his mind stirred by a thousand questions ;—or who can make his way unmoved out of that very gate on which Dürer must have gazed so often from his balcony along the long solemn way, lined with the stations of the Saviour's passion, to the little rude burying-ground, full of turf-mounds and homely crosses, where the great painter lies. The mere sight of the place, and of the names of its past inhabitants, seems enough to wake in the most ordinary mind distinctest visions of the past.

Perhaps this very fact has something to do with the flatness and disappointing character of both the books before us. So much of the picturesque lies on the surface, that the subject seems almost overflowing to a hasty glance ; and we cannot but feel that the writer who had thus been tempted into it must have fallen into a very abyss of discouragement on finding how little material there was for any novel chapter of captivating semi-history. Mrs Heaton has tried very hard to keep up the lofty strain with which she sets out from those wonderful characteristic streets of old Nuremberg, but the effort cannot be said to be very successful. No one, however great a master or mistress of the art of word-painting, can go on for more than a chapter or two about the high roofs, the quaint gables, the antique perfection of the strange old city. The painter

with such a subject in hand may permit himself unbounded licence, but not the writer ; and when the Dürer-haus, and the Sebald's kirche and the Lorenz-kirche, Adam Kraft and Peter Vischer, the Castle, the Pegnitz, and the streets, have been exhausted, it is sad to find how little there is to be said about the central figure which gives to this picturesque scene so much of its interest. Mrs Heaton has treated the subject picturesquely, and Mr Scott thoughtfully. The lady, we presume, is new to literature, but she writes easily and well, though perhaps with an occasional redundancy of adjectives, and repetition of "grand old man," or "grand winged woman," which is slightly exasperating to the reader. But she knows what she is about, and has evidently given much care and labour to her list of Dürer's works and estimate of them. Mr Scott—who is a painter himself, and therefore has an additional right to undertake the subject—goes into this part of it also with conscientious industry and skill ; and as he is less fond of attributing a mystical uncertainty of meaning, he is perhaps, on the whole, a more satisfactory guide.

This portion of the work is, however, thoroughly well done by both biographers, and nobody can have any further excuse for not knowing what are Dürer's great works, either on canvas or copper, or for lacking some certain perception of the strange force of melancholy meaning and Gothic wealth of genius which were in the man. The catalogue is not only clear, but it is interesting, and it is difficult to know which of the two versions of it deserves the preference. Each writer has a different opinion about the marvellous print of the "Melinconia," and about that grim and solemn composition called, "The Knight, Death, and the Devil ;" but these are subjects on which critics will differ in opinion as long as pictures are discussed. Mrs Heaton's book is the more valu-

able of the two, however, in so far as it affords the reader an opportunity of forming his own opinion, and brings him to a certain extent into the personal influence of Dürer himself by means of the engravings and photographs with which it is profusely illustrated. The "*Melinconia*," for instance, perhaps the most curiously impressive picture ever composed in black and white, is not to be realised from mere description. No artist in any kind has ever more wonderfully expressed the pause and wistful suspension of the creative mind in the midst of its toils and thoughts. The figure which fills the foreground is that of a woman, large, ample, and divinely tall, a great splendid type of German vitality, nowise idealised in form, though with more beauty of countenance than Dürer is apt to indulge in. Though her dress is that of any contemporary Frau in Nuremberg, and she carries purse and keys at her girdle, this impersonation of musing genius has wings at her stately shoulders, emblems of a power beyond that of common flesh and blood. Around her are scattered the instruments of art, at once in its commoner and its more mystic forms. She may have been writing her fancies in clay or on canvas; she may have been brooding over the distant crucible, making meaner metals into gold, according to the dream of the sages; she may have been measuring the orbits of the stars, and naming them one by one; but now she has dropped upon a bench with her head bent and her eyes raised, gazing out of their deep setting in that wistfulness of power which can do so much, yet never can do all; which feels almost everything within its reach, yet realises the restraint of that "almost" as smaller spirits capable of little never do realise their heavier bonds. It is not pain that is in her face; it is not even weariness. Near, so near the divine secret, but sure never to touch

it, penetrated by the wistful sense of that vicinity and that impossibility, she gazes forth at awful nature, at wonderful art, so well known, deeply fathomed, closely embraced, yet never to be fully understood. Of all pictures illustrative of human genius, this is perhaps the most intense and significant. It is the first that should be hung in the study of every poet, whatever be the form of poetry in which he expresses himself. Yet it is not the soft celestial melancholy of the poets, nor any pensive gentleness of thought, which shines through it. The creature here presented to us is not softly visionary, nor a dreamer of sweet dreams; she is not even poetry herself, always young and always fair,—but the strong, mature, potential genius which is stern as well as sweet, and knows the evil as well as the good, and the bitterness and severity and suffering of life. When she leaves her various and great labours—labours in which no faculty is left unoccupied, and which still brood about her as she broods, filling the air with a certain sense of energy and force restrained—even in the stillness the thoughts that move her are great thoughts. It is not despair, for hers is too noble and full a being for despair; nor is it despondency, nor fatigue, nor sorrow. It is the sense of that limit which binds the highest—a limit which she does not fret against, but wistfully gazes at, recognising it, feeling its inevitable power, against which no resistance is of any avail, yet ready, when the mood is over, to arise in greatness, and set all her glorious strength to work again. The end will never be attained, she knows—never in this world, which is so full of pain and strife and imperfection; but nevertheless, while the great mystery lasts life lasts; and the best, on the whole, is, that care and toil should go on.

Such is not exactly the opinion of either of Albrecht Dürer's pre-

sent biographers; but yet their differing judgments do not stray very far from this conception. We will not follow them into any further discussion of those wonderful engravings upon which so much of the painter's fame rests. We can but repeat that both have given the fullest diligence to make out their list, and that in both cases it seems conscientious and reliable—Mr Scott's information being at once more detailed and more concise, a thorough guide to the collector and student; while Mrs Heaton's is more diffuse, and much more full. This is no small praise; and had either or both of these writers been content to take as the subject of his or her book the works of Albrecht Dürer—works which have been before the world for three centuries, which are surrounded by as many means of proving their genealogy as if they were German archdukes, and which are capable of many an interesting digression—their work would have been most satisfactorily performed. Both, however, unfortunately, have been beguiled by the popular modern notion that a great workman must also at the same time have a great life—one which will be of everlasting interest to his fellow-creatures. Never was there a greater mistake. We look with dismay upon the heavy Albrecht of Mr Scott, and the half-commercial, half-dreamy painter of Mrs Heaton. The few letters which are all that remain to be quoted, and the account-book journal of his journey into the Netherlands, give anything but an enlivening picture of the man. He was young when he went to Venice, and it might be supposed that the society of so many young painters of the highest talent—amongst them Titian and Giorgione—with old Bellini at the head of the community, beautiful Venice around, and strenuous life and energy running high in the veins of the young Teuton, would have called forth some clear expression of his nature. But his letters

to his friend Pirkheimer are such as any vulgar burges might write to another, full of heavy personal banter and insignificant details—letters of the most completely uninteresting and commonplace description. Here and there occurs a sentence only half intelligible, and the reader pricks up his ears; but a second glance is enough to assure him that the mystery is not worth solving, and that it is no meaning, and not wit, which puzzles him. We do not conclude from this that Dürer's mind was unworthy of investigation, or himself without interest, but simply that he was a man possessed of one mode of utterance, which he used largely and nobly, but not of a second; and that it is cruel now, three hundred years after, to force him before the bar of public opinion, and compel him to express himself in words for which he never had any faculty. It is as unjustifiable to print poor Dürer's journal, as it would be to print the jottings which a modern traveller, going over the same ground, puts down in the blank leaves of his Bradshaw, of his hotel bills and incidental expenses. Probably the man of the nineteenth century, with the help of Murray, would give us the most information. One page of this journal might indeed have made us generally aware of the difference between the Murray-and-Bradshaw-guided traveller and him of the fifteenth century, but there can be no excuse for inflicting so many uninteresting details upon us. "The impatient reader can skip if he pleases, but the weary translator must needs be faithful," says Mrs Heaton, as if her last and severest duty was the reproduction of this dreariest document. And Mr Scott also inflicts it upon us at full length, though it is very hard to tell why. The impression left upon the reader's mind is that of a methodical and orderly soul, careful to put down all his expenses, liberal in his way, giving presents and receiving

them, dining out a great deal, and receiving much friendly homage in the way of tavern-treats, wine, and sweetmeats, and sometimes a great banquet where everybody does him honour; a man, too, politic in his way, not neglectful of just means of advancing himself, and with a great deal of honest curiosity about him—but without a sentiment or a thought which might not have come equally well from Willibald Pirkheimer, or from Willibald's clerk. The only exception to the completely uninteresting character of this journal, is an outburst about Luther, written at the moment when the Reformer was carried off to the Wartburg in the middle of his career—an incident which rouses Dürer to sudden energy. He throws his calculations aside for the moment, as he laments the supposed loss of the man who “so clearly and transparently” set forth the Holy Scriptures, and expresses himself in very distinct terms as to the misdeemeanours of Rome. He did not, so far as is apparent, ever separate himself publicly from the Church, but the state of his feelings is sufficiently clear from this very earnest and serious utterance. “Oh God! is Luther dead? Who will henceforward explain to us so clearly the Holy Gospel?” he cries, with a curious painter-like appreciation of the new light; and then goes on with quaint simplicity, and that absence of all sense of humour which distinguishes the primitive mind, to call upon Erasmus to take Luther's place—Erasmus, who is but a little old manikin, only good for two years' work at the most, and whom Dürer exhorts to make a grand use of these two years, and end as a martyr, seeing that he cannot live long anyhow, nor have much enjoyment of his life.

“Oh, all ye Christian men, pray to God for help,” he adds, with that curiously commonplace tone of expression which confounds all characteristic differences in the majority of men when they speak of religious

subjects; “for His judgment draws nigh, and His righteousness shall be made plain. Then we shall see the blood of the innocent, which popes, bishops, and monks have spilt, rise up in judgment and condemn them (Apocal.) And there are the souls of the slain that lie under the altar of God and cry for vengeance, to which the voice of God replies, Fill up the measure of the innocent who are slain, then will I judge.”

“And I have changed one florin for living expenses; I have given the doctor eight stiver. Item: I have dined twice with Ruderigo; I have dined with the rich Canon,” adds the placid Master, when he has said his say on the one subject of popular enthusiasm which seems to have touched him. Strange, yet quite flat and uncharacteristic, is the outburst—wonderful the sudden drop down to more familiar everyday matters. Dürer had another voice, in which he spoke as no man of his nation was speaking. Why should we, or rather why should his historians, demand of the man that he should have two?

Another curious feature in these books is the determined set which both biographers make at the unfortunate Agnes, his wife—a poor, defenceless, speechless woman, who absolutely does nothing, so far as we can see, to deserve the repeated onslaughts made upon her. We are told she made him wretched, forced him to work, exacted a rigid account of his money, and generally was the very nightmare of his existence, notwithstanding that he describes himself as a very independent *bourgeois* indeed, giving stivers right and left, making all sort of purchases, and even playing and losing, without a word of any possible scolding from the good Frau, whom he leaves so often at home in her inn, with her maid for company. The sole foundation for these assertions seems to be a letter written after Dürer's death by his friend Pirkheimer, in

which he makes very severe strictures on the wife, about whom it is evident he had permitted himself to make some very unseemly suggestions during Dürer's absence in Venice. Pirkheimer seems to have been a man of well-known licentious character, and Agnes was a beautiful and severely-proper young woman; so that it is not very difficult to see how a feud might have arisen between them. Nevertheless Mr Scott and Mrs Heaton both go over the same well-worn ground. They remark (both) that earlier biographers, unconscious of the existence of the journal by which it is proved that the painter was accompanied by his wife in his journey into the Netherlands, have described that journey as a despairing attempt on Dürer's part to escape from his domestic unhappiness—without, however, drawing from this mistake the natural lesson, that the general ill report brought up against poor Agnes rests upon the very slightest and most unsatisfactory foundation. Dürer himself does not breathe the shadow of a reproach. He calls her (or some one else) his mistress of accounts in one of his early letters—an expression much relied upon by Agnes's assailants, but which was just as probably a title playfully caressing as reproachful. And if there is anybody to be found fault with in the Belgian expedition it is Herr Albrecht himself, who contracts with his host for his own individual dinner, like a very uncivil and feast-loving husband, adding, "My wife and her maid must dine by themselves up-stairs." Pretty treatment for a poor lady on a holiday tour! Yet "she probably considered that she had only done her duty in worrying her husband to death," says Mrs Heaton, without one single fact or even well-founded fancy to build the accusation upon, except Pirkheimer's letter. Poor Agnes! the chances are that if

she had flirted with that gross Herr Willibald, and made herself agreeable to him, we should have heard a very different character of her.

Nothing could be more unlike these two studies of medieval history, so strong in art, so bare in the incidents of human life, than the little book which came from the press about the same time—the '*Memoirs of the Marquise de Montagu*.*' The scene changes not only from the verge of antiquity to the bustle of modern life, but from the quiet of obscure safety and homely comfort into the splendour, the misery, the heartrending chances of that tragic moment, in which the eighteenth century ended in France, expiating its wickedness and levity and gay hardness of heart in blood and tears such as have not watered the soil of any other civilised country. Some doubt has been thrown upon the perfect accuracy of the details of this book, which are very minute, and in which it may well be that imagination has slightly filled out the outlines of recollection. But as it was first printed for private circulation among the people most certain to be well informed on the subject, we cannot suppose that anything considerable has been added to the Marquise's journals. We read it for the first time some five years ago, in a copy covered over with armorial bearings, in the Faubourg St Germain, the property of a lady connected with half the families recorded in its pages. It was the book of the moment in that well-informed region; and having passed the ordeal of such criticism as was likely to be given there, we cannot suppose there can be much to find fault with in point of fact. The execution and spirit of the book are very curious. Its heroes and heroines are all real figures, taken from the highest rank of French aristocracy at a time when morals were low everywhere, and

* *Memoirs of the Marquise de Montagu*. By the Baroness de Noailles. London: Bentley.

especially low in France—at a time, in short, when oppression and misery had driven a whole nation mad, and its former rulers were finding out, at once what awful penalties attended the sins of their fathers, and what noble qualities were in themselves—upon the scaffold and in the streets of Paris, which were red with slaughter—and more tediously, if less sharply, in exile and poverty. We have heard, till we are almost weary of hearing, how the doomed *noblesse* sang and flirted and talked in the prisons up to the last fatal moment; when, one by one, the victims were carried off in their tragic gaiety to end at once their mirth and their sorrows. And even in this volume there are traces of national customs at which many a virtuous insular reader will shudder. The peasants danced before the windows of the chateau on the Sunday evenings—with an awful profanity, which, we do not doubt, will still seem to some people to justify any amount of “judgment”—under the very eyes of Madame de Montagu herself. But yet, notwithstanding this confession, the atmosphere and spirit of the book are Puritan in the severest sense of the word. Madame de Montagu was an excellent Catholic. One of her great distinctions in life was, that she was the means of converting a German family, hapless children of the Reformation, to the true faith; and yet there was never a lady of the Commonwealth more Puritan than she, nor a Low-Church sister more Evangelical. The very same strain of piety which is in the religious biographies—we do not say of the present day, but of twenty years ago, when the Evangelical party was more potent than now—breathes through this record of the thoughts and feelings of the French Marquise of last century. Probably Madame de Montagu would have looked with pitying hopelessness upon the heretic graces of Hedley Vicars, while to him she would have been but a be-

nighted Papist. But it is curious to note how completely the spirit of both is the same. Naturally, in the case of the lady, that austere piety is sweetened and made gracious by a hundred pretty circumstances which do not attract us to the commonplace Protestant saint; but the resemblance ought at least to convey a deeper toleration, if not to the Catholic reader, at least to the Protestant, who is not bound by his faith to excommunicate his neighbour, even if that neighbour has a ball on Sunday—the most curious accompaniment of Puritanism which the English imagination can conceive.

Madame de Montagu was the daughter of the Duc d'Ayen, of the noble family of Noailles. Her mother was a D'Aguesseau, granddaughter of the Chancellor. She was related to half the highest nobility of France, inheriting the bluest of blood, and to all appearance destined to the highest fortune. The story of her family, no less than her own individual history, throws a curious light upon the constitution of the family in France as then existing, and still, we believe, to some extent, in existence; a constitution which explains the extraordinary force of domestic affections—the bond, for instance, between mother and children, which is the one relationship which is perfect among our neighbours, and held most sacred—notwithstanding the comparative laxity of the marriage-tie, upon which it is our theory to believe all the domestic affections are built. No doubt the fact that the young people had little choice in the election of their wives and husbands hindered that prompt alienation from the old family into the new which we consider the order of nature in England, but which in England, as elsewhere, gives to fathers and mothers, often enough, a sore heart. In those days it is evident that a new husband never dreamt of absorbing his wife's affections

and withdrawing her from her family. Such an idea did not enter into the theory of life. Madame d'Ayen brought up her five daughters without any great assistance from her husband. He was busy with a thousand affairs, a visitor received with much state and pomp and appearance of joy, but noway necessary to the household. Such seems to have been the lot of Madame de Montagu herself to a considerable extent. She, too, forms her little world about her, not independent altogether of her husband, but without any necessary reference to him. He goes and comes, always welcome, but never indispensable; his duties become her duties, and she accepts, as a matter of course, the care and tendance of his father as her natural share of the family responsibility; but her children are hers, and so are her arrangements. When necessity makes it desirable to divide their expenses, she goes her way to one relation, while her husband joins another. They are thoroughly kind, attached friends, with mutual interests and pleasures, but they never pretend to have but one life. The theory is worth consideration, and, after all, is perhaps not so bad as it seems; for, to be sure, a great many married people find it impossible to have but one life between them; and the sensible understanding of the French household that such a thing can be dispensed with, without heartburnings or that deplorable sense of failure which makes home miserable, might be worth cultivating when the other was not to be had. Thus, it is evident, arose that pre-eminence of the mother, which now and then gives a somewhat sickly character to French romance, but has, it cannot be doubted, a wonderfully softening and elevating effect upon life; for the woman is always supposed to be able to make herself happy with her children, to find sufficient compensation in them for other wants, and, above all, to have possession

of them beyond all doubt or question. We are not sure, indeed, whether in his heart of hearts a Frenchman does not feel it to be derogatory to a woman to be capable of any but maternal passion. While we in England proclaim upon a thousand notes the pre-eminence of Love, distinctively so called, the French romancist shrugs his shoulders, and takes a different view of the question. His model woman, his type of purity, adores only her children. Passion he will give you in plenty, but not of that kind which we consider to be made commendable—nay, to be converted into the highest of all sentiments—by the marriage-vow. He does not realise the force of that mystic union. His is, no doubt, a lower theory—the theory of nature in her inferior forms of being. We do not applaud nor hold it up for imitation; but yet there are cases in which it works well. Madame d'Ayen bringing up her children in content and dignified tranquillity, with a charming friendly regard for the husband who comes to see her now and then, but yet quite able to do without him when need is, is surely a more dignified figure than the deserted wife raving after the object of her passion, or than the superior wife who is galled by her husband's imperfections at every step she takes. The Frenchwoman accepts the life she cannot mend as a *fait accompli*, and throws herself contentedly into the young lives, which she hopes to be able to set right. So does many an English wife, no doubt, but she does it against her theory; while her Continental sister has all the support which can be given by the belief that such is the natural course of affairs.

This is a long digression out of a little book, but there is a certain interest in observing how any theory of life gets itself into being. The Duchesse d'Ayen gave herself up to her five girls. "She embraced them affectionately in the

morning, and met them on her way to hear early mass at the Jacobins or at St Roch; she dined with them at three o'clock, and after the repast she took them to her bed-chamber: this was a large room hung with crimson damask, ornamented with gold lace, and containing an enormous bed. The Duchess sat in an easy-chair near the fireplace, having her snuff-box, books, and writing materials at hand, while her daughters were grouped around her, the eldest being seated on chairs, and the younger on stools, a playful struggle taking place between them as to who should be nearest their mother's chair. While they worked, they chatted over the lessons of the previous night and the little events of the day. Strange peaceful glimpse of quiet life while the tempest was brewing and the wild winds rising outside! Two of these women were to perish by the guillotine, innocent expiators of sins not theirs; another was to be the wife of La Fayette, to live through triumph and downfall, to pine in French and Austrian prisons; another to wander from one strange country to another in want and misery. The happy one was the one most mourned, the early dead who sat and chattered like the rest, unconscious what doom lay over her. The house was in the Rue St Honoré, opposite St Roch, and all was still and bright about the young mother and her girls. The book is a very calm, soberly-toned book, but the reader will find it difficult to look at this tranquil domestic picture, the young creatures at their needlework, the mother with her soft advising and reproofs, without feeling a shudder and thrill run over him at thought of the approaching fate.

The women thus trained were equal to the terrible yet high destiny which awaited them. The eldest bore the horrors of the Luxembourg prison, the Conciergerie, and the scaffold, with that noble and sweet composure which prevents

the dreadful story of the French Revolution from becoming merely a horror and fear in the pages of history; and two at least of the others acquitted themselves as gallantly as any of their warlike ancestors, and with a dauntless patience and unflagging energy which might have turned the scale of national fortune had it been the men and not the women who possessed it at that momentous time. But the women were innocent, which perhaps was the secret of their strength. Madame de Montagu was one of the early *émigrés* along with her husband and his father, and was tossed about the world from England to Germany, and back again into Holland and Switzerland, never losing her courage nor forgetting her fellow-creatures in her own troubles. The story of these distresses, which might otherwise become monotonous, is lightened by the person and household of a delicious, strong-minded aunt, philosopher and Voltairian, who offers her pious niece a shelter with genuine kindness; but drives her half frantic in the evenings, what with novel-reading and bold discussions of everything in heaven and earth. This lady, the Comtesse de Tessé, had been prudent enough and fortunate enough to realise a part of her fortune before leaving France, with which she purchased a farm in the canton of Fribourg, called Lowenberg. "She was of a very noble character," we are told; but she was a strange companion for Madame de Montagu, whose tender Puritanism and boundless charity must have received many a shock from the strange, worldly-minded, freethinking old lady, whose imperious manner and philosophical talk, her nervous twitches, and her card-playing, and her curiously-compounded household, are all set before us with a certain sense of humour. There was a M. de Tessé, though his existence seems quite unimportant; and there was

also, a M. le Marquis de Mun, an old friend, with his son—"a good conversationist, a skilful player of cards, very witty, benevolent, and imperturbably even-tempered." M. de Tessé "superintended the cultivation of the land; when necessary he went on journeys; but he did not occupy much attention nor any prominent place in the drawing-room," says the candid story. Nevertheless the worldly old woman was kind, and though she professed to hate the clergy, supported three poor exiled priests from the proceeds of her garden. When Madame de Montagu heard this, she took to watering the garden with a zeal which infinitely amazed her aunt, especially as the poor young soul, with her head full of miserable anxiety about her friends in danger, took special pains to water the nettles, which were plants she was not acquainted with. Under Madame de Tessé's roof she heard of the execution of her own mother and sisters, of which a most touching account is given; and after that awful crisis accompanied her aunt in further wanderings, which at length brought them to the shores of the Baltic. During this time she had in her humbleness originated a gigantic scheme for the relief of the often starving *émigrés*, whose fortune she had herself shared for some years—and had been at length reunited to her husband. But the evening talk and the reading was always a great trial to her. She sat apart when she could, and did her knitting, and thought her own pious thoughts, taking very little part in the conversations. One week they read '*Les Chevaliers des Cynges*,' by Madame de Genlis; for a month they were occupied by '*Clarissa Harlowe*,' then '*Tristram Shandy*.' And then followed discussions which were still more hard to bear. When her nieces, the Demoiselles de la Fayette, joined the circle, however, the gentle Puritan could stand it no longer. She withdrew with the girls, and read

to them while they made and mended their clothes. "It will be readily conceived," says her biographer, "that she did not read novels to them, but sermons of Fénelon, the Book of Job (!), Bossuet's '*Oraisons Funèbres*;' in fact, all that was fitted to raise their minds above the misery, and also above the joys, of this earth." Poor Anastasie and Virginie! probably they would have preferred the novels.

The book is perhaps a little dull, or at least mild in its interest; but it is a curious and not unattractive study of French patrician life as seen not from without but within, a change of view which makes all the difference. It does in its way for the *noblesse* of the Revolution what the '*Récit d'une Sœur*' has done for their descendants. It lifts the veil in front of which we see only the flash and sparkle of a national gaiety and vivacity which no trouble can subdue, and which we are so apt in our scornful insular way to call frivolity; and shows the delicate Puritanism and highly-strained piety just trembling on the verge of exaggeration, which is almost always the mournful companion, watcher, reprove, and expiator of a reckless and vicious generation. How often this austere yet gentle figure, almost warped from perception of the most natural and innocent joys by the burden of the sins of its age, stands in the background behind the libertine and the oppressor, can perhaps never be discovered by any human power of reckoning. Its faults can scarcely be said to be its own, but its virtues are all nobly individual. Fortunately the story here is so told that even while he smiles at the pensive Puritan, who makes her appearance in the strange disguise of a French Marquise of the eighteenth century, the reader will feel more than half disposed at the same moment to bend his knee to the pure, courageous, tender, and cha-

ritable woman, whose intense domestic affections never dim her perception of the wants of others, and who endures almost every anguish that life can bring—calamities far beyond the common level, and petty worries of the very pettiest and most exasperating description—without ever flinching or breaking down. It is a side of the Revolution story, that grand tragedy which no spectator can see or hear of without blanched cheek and bated breath, which is but little known; but, still more, it is a phase of French and Roman Catholic life, which it will be well for us, who are so ready to brand the nation with levity and the Church with spiritual darkness, to mark and learn.

This is no place to discuss the chief of recent contributions to the poetry of the time—the new volume which Mr Tennyson entitles ‘The Holy Grail;’ neither, indeed, should we think it fair under any circumstances to criticise a fragment of a work, or, what is still more, a collection of fragments, meant to be judged, not separately, but in their relative place. It is unfortunate, however, that the stories contained in this new volume are precisely those which least bear individual inspection, and are most inseparably connected with the great drama which they complete. Enid and Elaine are quite comprehensible by themselves, and may rank as separate romances if the reader so chooses. But this is not the case with any one of the new chapters. They are of the last importance to the completed cycle of legends, to which, in fact, they are in some degree a key. But they do not take rank by themselves; they are inseparably linked with that which comes before and that which follows after. The reader who attempts to take them as independent productions, will find himself confused by a perpetual reference to some-

thing out of the book he is reading, and with the flutter about him of a hundred threads which must be attached elsewhere before harmony can come out of the chaos. This will probably prolong their time of probation, and postpone the moment at which they may be expected to have found their proper place; and indeed it is quite possible that they never will take their proper place until the present separate editions are exhausted, and the Arthurian poems finally go to our grandchildren in the arrangement their author intended. It is unfortunate for Mr Tennyson’s contemporaries that this should be so, even though it will not hinder the circulation of his new volume, or prove any drawback to it in a mercantile point of view—for it puzzles the popular mind and troubles the hasty reader; and are not the most of us hasty readers in these quick-moving days? Therefore we will not attempt to say anything about the ‘Holy Grail,’ not having space or opportunity to discuss it, as it ought to be discussed, along with the other parts of the work to which it belongs.

Under the head of Poetry we turn in the first place to a very different production, a thing as small as the other is great—a book entitled ‘Poems by Menella Bute Smedley,’* to which our own attention has been drawn (we confess, with shame; for ought we not to have known better?) by the newspapers. In the newspapers we have learned that a certain dramatic sketch contained in it, called “Lady Grace,” is the first essay at the drama of the nineteenth century; a new beginning in dramatic literature, a combination of fine poetry with skilful plot and high purpose, and a great many other fine things besides. We confess, and we are ashamed of it, that having no previous acquaintance with the writer’s name, we were so simple, so foolish, so forgetful

* Poems by Menella Bute Smedley. London: Strahan & Co.

of experience, as to believe in the newspapers, and send for the book. And here is another great injustice involved in all such unfair and untrue criticism. The book is a harmless little book, which, no doubt, amused the author and pleased her friends, and demanded no special notice one way or other, until it occurred to some injudicious supporter to write it up. If we withhold our hand, now that it lies before us, some other operator less remorseful will one day probably have it thrown in his way, and will not withhold his hand; so that we silence the compassion which pleads for the poor little weakling, as something not deserving of any Nemesis. It is not on Miss Smedley, however, that Nemesis frowns, but upon the *Superfine Review*, and the *Looker-on*, and the other influential vehicles of criticism which have chosen to present Miss Smedley to the world as a genuine candidate for poetical honours; and not only for the honours of poetry, but for those of dramatical literature—a branch of art which requires very rare qualities, and is not to be taken up promiscuously at the will of any novice. We grant that Miss Smedley writes pretty verses; and there is one thing in the volume, which has a right in its gentle way to be called a poem—a right which we do not think is possessed by any of the others. The “*Little Fair Soul*” is very sweet, and tender, and touching. It is the story of a little human spirit, which, looking “over the edge of Paradise,” sees a brother striving to get in. The spirit outside can find no way of entrance; the gate is fast, and there is no one to open; and the little brother who is safe within is disturbed in his tranquil bliss. He is not an evangelical little soul, able to wrap himself up in his little white robe, and pull his gold crown all the more securely on his

brow, and be smugly happy over his good fortune, while the forlorn spirit weeps and beats at the golden gates. It is thus that his pity and love and eagerness work in behalf of the petitioner without.

“I cannot move this mighty weight,
I cannot find this golden key;
But hosts of heaven around us wait,
And none has ever said ‘No’ to me.

‘Sweet Saint, put by thy palm and scroll,
And come, undo the door for me!’
‘Rest thee still, thou little fair soul,
It is not mine to keep the key.’

‘Kind Angel, strike these doors apart!
The air without is dark and cold.’
‘Rest thee still, thou little pure heart;
Not for my word will they unfold.’

Up all the shining heights he prayed
For that poor shadow in the cold;
Still came the word, ‘Not ours to aid;
We cannot make the doors unfold.’

But that poor shadow, still outside,
Wrung all the sacred air with pain,
And all the souls went up and cried
Where never cry was heard in vain.

No eye beheld the pitying face,
The answer none might understand,
But dimly through the silent space
Was seen the stretching of a hand.”

This is very touching and sweet; it is the only real gem in all the volume, and we feel that we have done full justice to Miss Smedley’s poetical power when we have pointed it out to the impartial reader who is capable of judging of its merits for himself. But *Lady Grace* is a very different matter. It is the story of a sentimental widow whose husband has made a very ridiculous will, by which he commits to her charge two of his wards, a nephew and niece, putting their fortunes and their future entirely in her hands. The man must have been insane; and it is quite clear that his will could not have sustained any searching investigation, for he goes on in a secret codicil, which nobody knows of but his lawyer, to ordain that if his widow marries again, one half of her fortune shall be forfeited on the spot, and the other half “shall be secured to her second husband for his sole use and benefit.” The

lawyer who is trusted with this strange document is as sentimental as Lady Grace and her early but unavowed lover ; and it may easily be supposed what trouble is thus brewed, and how he stifles his affections lest he should seem mercenary, after a well-worn expedient of lovers. The motive of the piece, therefore, is to disembarass the too conscientious solicitor, and so entrap the lady, that it may be absolutely for her advantage that he should interpose. No Minerva Press heroine ever fell into a snare more helplessly than does this gushing and foolish widow. She adopts the nephew and niece whom her husband has left to her, wildly paying the debts of the Guardsman, and taking the girl of the period to live with her, and offering to be a mother to them all ; although she herself all the while, according to the narrative, is sufficiently young and charming to suggest very different ideas. She is rich, fair, unfettered, party-giving, and popular—as unlikely a person, according to ordinary principles, to have anything unpleasant happen to her as can be conceived ; but her author means that she should be ruined socially, and has to accomplish it as best she can. The niece Rosa has been beguiled by a braggart and *roué* to visit him at his rooms, in order, as she thinks, to receive an ornament she has won from him, but in reality to be exhibited to a party of men assembled for the purpose, on a bet made by the Lothario that she will come to him on a certain day at a certain hour. Lady Grace knows that her niece has gone away with Sir George, and hurries after her in a very high-flown state indeed, resolving to do or die in the service of the girl, who is about a hundred years older than she is, and a thousand times more knowing. She arrives when Rosa, beginning to be frightened, is prevented from escaping by the servant, who declines to let her go. This famous (and altogether real) obstacle quenches all the re-

solution of Lady Grace, who finds it easy enough to get in, but is driven desperate by this refusal to let them go. Fancy any flunky, however pampered a menial, defying a matron and lady of fashion, and keeping her locked into a bachelor's apartments in the calm respectable streets of modern London ! Lady Grace finds no better expedient than to change cloaks with Rosa (who, we are already told, had put on a mantle of her aunt's to come out in, which makes the expedient curiously unnecessary), and send her away, remaining in her place. She has then a most high-flown conversation with the *roué*, who has been absent during this change of visitors. Instead of denouncing and exposing him, as it is clearly both her duty and policy to do, she throws herself metaphorically at his feet, pleading that he will not betray her niece, but lets him betray herself with the strangest imbecility. His *friends*, with whom he has betted, come pouring into the room, among them a man, whom, not caring the least for him, she has been persuaded to accept as her future husband. And though she is represented to us as a woman sufficiently mature to have some command of herself, and some perception of her own dignity, Lady Grace shrinks and trembles like any poor governess, suffers the villain to make some pretence of a charitable errand, falters, and "claims the gentle judgment" of these gaping sneering spectators, and slinks out with her character irretrievably injured. This is the sort of thing which, we are told, is an attempt at the formation of a genuine drama of the nineteenth century. It never seems to occur to the author for a moment that her heroine behaves like the silliest school-girl, or that even the silliest school-girl might have found something to say for herself in so outrageous a situation. The reader shall have this scene, that he may judge whether there

is any grace of poetry to make up for its unnatural folly.

"LADY GRACE.

Will you tell your man To let me pass? He barred the way before, According to your honourable orders.

SIR GEORGE.

(*Pointing to the vestibule door, and speaking with an air of confusion.*)
The room is full of men.

LADY GRACE.

You can dismiss them.

SIR GEORGE.

But how? They know there is a lady here. Though you disdain me, I would do you pleasure If it were possible. This was a wager. They know too much to go, not knowing more.

LADY GRACE.

Know they the lady's name?

SIR GEORGE.

Not certainly.

LADY GRACE.

Swear to me that you will not breathe her name!

Let me pass for her; none will aim at me,—

I am wide of all the targets. Ah, be kind! I will believe you never purposed harm—Nay, I'll think nobly of you.

SIR GEORGE.

I were loath

To lose my chance of such a thought, and if—

LADY GRACE.

(*With her hands on his arm.*)

Oh, no, no, no! set not a traitor 'If' Between your soul and any gracious act! You shall not stir till you have promised me!

SIR GEORGE.

(*Turning to her, and taking her hand.*)

Nay—there's my promise!

(*Enter FITZGERSE, RAYMOND, CAPEL, and LORD LYNTON.*)

ALL.

(*Speaking as they enter.*)

Treason, Sandys, treason!

Where is this lady? Is the wager lost? Or do you mock us?

SIR GEORGE.

(*To them.*)

Were you not entreated To wait my summons? Do not be amazed. She came upon a charitable errand.

(*To LADY GRACE.*)

And so, dear lady, having heard your tale, And helped your client, you will suffer me To be your honoured escort.

LADY GRACE.

You are thanked

With all the words I have.

CAPEL.

It is Lady Grace!

VOL. CVIL.—NO. DCLV.

RAYMOND.

I am struck dumb.

FITZGERSE.

If I had met a ghost

I should be less disturbed.

LORD LYNTON.

(*Gravely advancing with LADY GRACE's hat and cloak.*)

Pray you, permit me;

Your charitable errand being fulfilled, You may resume your cloak.

(*He puts it on for her. She stands in manifest embarrassment.*)

The hour is late;

My carriage can convey you home, unless Some exigence of charitable duty Demand a journey with this gentleman.

LADY GRACE.

I claim your gentle judgment, having never Deserved a doubt.

LORD LYNTON.

(*Conducting her to the door.*)

I do not judge a woman;

I trust her—when I can.

(*RAYMOND, CAPEL, FITZGERSE, all draw back to let LADY GRACE pass. RAYMOND opens the door for her.*)

LADY GRACE.

Thank you. Good-night!

I shall meet you at the hall on Thursday!

RAYMOND.

Yes;

I book you for a valse.

LADY GRACE.

I do not dance.

RAYMOND.

You did not—all things change—I live in hope.

LADY GRACE.

(*Aside.*)

Means he to twit me with my past? I like not

That phrase of 'change' and 'hope.'

(*She turns as she is leaving the room, and speaks with great dignity.*)

My presence here

Is a dark sentence; pray, decipher it By the unflinching lustre of my life, And you shall find the words are—inno-cent.

(*They stand silent. Exit LADY GRACE.*)

If this is the drama of the future, heaven preserve the poor actresses and actors! It never seems to occur to Miss Smedley that a respectable woman might make a simple explanation to her friends and lover without any flutterings or protestations of innocence, or that a high-bred lady might have a little more discretion than a milliner's girl. This is the

2 X

stuff which the most accredited organs of popular criticism have attempted to foist upon us as a dramatic poem, representing the new conditions and characteristic aspects of life in the nineteenth century! We beg Miss Smedley's pardon for having given so prominent a place to a piece of ambitious dulness and nonsense like the above. But it is not our fault, but that of her too kind reviewers, who have thus endeavoured to persuade the public into receiving, as something worth its attention, a very poor and very false piece of mingled flippancy and sentimentality. Such delusive guidance is a thing far more dangerous than dozens of books of so-called poetry, which harm nobody, and are capable, we suppose, of being swallowed and assimilated by the amazing digestion of youth. Once upon a time we too remember to have been able to read and get some modest pleasure out of the pretty slim volumes which a young writer with an admiring circle of friends may be forgiven, once in a way, for calling poetry; but to be requested to receive such gentle jingle-jangle as meriting a serious judgment, and still more to have an absurd story in broken lines recommended to us as the drama of the future, is more than any conscientious reader can be expected to bear.

Our impatience calms down as by a sudden peaceful touch, when we escape out of this babble into the dreamy quiet of the 'Earthly Paradise,'* and see Mr Morris's ancient travellers seated calm in their great hall, or out upon the sunny lawns, with now and then a leaf dropping through the soft air, and the young folk busy with their harvesting, gathering the ruddy apples on the ground by the river-side, the great purple grape-bunches on the terraces. The serene maturity of autumn has come into the round, full, sweet monotony of the verse. No stir is in it of the livelier younger

year. A haze obscures the blue, the very air drowns full of a murmurous warmth and sound. Life and its doings are all as a dream to those spectators, who see, while the tale goes on, glimpses of all the various dreams and deceits of existence—the joys that are to come to nothing, the griefs that, when they are past, will make a joy to others. This is the key-note of the new volume. Life is as a tale that is told. The misery and the delight are not altogether for their own sakes, as if any man could appropriate his fate to himself, but also for the use of others, all the world sharing in the profit and the pain.

"Both the blind and they who see full well
Go the same road, and leave a tale to tell
Of interwoven miseries; lest they
Who after them a while on earth must stay,
Should have no pleasure in the winter night,
When this man's pain is made that man's delight."

As is natural with such a dreamy philosophical yet sympathetic view of life, and its strange and melancholy chances, the tone of this new volume is chiefly melancholy. There is nothing in it like the cheerful vitality of the Man born to be a king, or the passionate delight of the story of Pygmalion. The reader sees everything that passes before him as the old men see it, who sit there like gods, knowing good and evil, with a half sense in their calm attentive souls that life was made for them, to keep them subtly, strangely alive with currents of other men's existence, and reflections from other men's thoughts. The story of the "Death of Paris" is told to us not so much for itself as for the effect upon the young ones which the old men watch, noting how it swells those same life-currents in their fountains, and guides the half-born stream into the channel, of which in time there shall come another tale.

" . . . Good it was for them to note
 The slim hand set into the changing
 throat,
 The lids down drooped to hide the pas-
 sionate eyes
 Whereto the sweet thoughts all unbid
 would rise;
 The bright-cheeked shame, the conscious
 mouth, as love
 Within the half-hid gentle breast 'gan
 move,
 Like a swift-opening flower beneath the
 sun;
 The sigh and half-frown as the tale was
 done,
 And thoughts uncertain, hard to grasp, did
 fit
 'Twixt the beginning and the end of it—
 And to their ancient eyes it well might
 seem
 Lay tale in tale, as dream within a dream."

Thus the mystic tide floats softly along from one dreamy tale to another, each contributing its special nourishment to the quiet of the old men's lives. The strain is monotonous, but only sufficiently so to be in perfect keeping with its occasion and purpose. Perhaps the tale which follows the "Death of Paris,"—the story called "East of the Sun, West of the Moon"—is the most charming in its lingering wistful sweetness. It is one of those strange fancies, dear to the Gothic mind, of a youth passing into an unknown visionary land through the love of some spirit-maiden—coming back again after a vague dreamy interval—living for love of her as in a dream, and finally disappearing at the end mystically in search of the love without which the world is waste to him. The hero is John, the least practical, least useful, of all a northern farmer's homely large-limbed sons—the musing poetic youth, full of dreams and silence, who is so dear to northern verse; and his love is a beautiful weird lady, whose swan-skin he secures, and who is consequently bound to him, at first by fate, and finally by love. The variety in the tale is, that John's love is not cruel nor faithless, and has no swan-husband already, waiting her in her mysterious country, as is usually the burden of such dreams; but is sweet and true, and only unlike a human maiden in the wisdom which raises her above his

simple love. But it is the supremacy of this love which is the burden of the tale; even after he has gone from her, and, drawn by human longing, has come back out of visionary joy into the real world, which is as a dream about him, to see his kindred and his father's house—his love, when driven desperate, has the power of calling her out of her sweet unknown land of dreams into visible revelation. Should he ever do this, she warns him it will be at the cost of suffering and pain to her, and possible separation for ever; but there comes a moment when John cannot forbear, but gives utterance to his passionate longing. In a sudden access of wild love and impatience he cries—

" 'Ah! what love,
 What love,' he cried, 'my heart should
 move,
 But my own love, my worshipped sweet!
 Would God that her beloved feet
 Would bless our threshold this same
 night!'"

She comes, and John is distraught with mingled rapture and terror. In the wild darkness of the Christmas night there is a sound of the horn without announcing some new comer.

"Then opened they the door, and strong
 The wild wind swept the hall along,
 Driving the hangings here and there,
 Making the torches ruddier,
 Darkening the fire. But therewithal
 An utter hush came o'er the hall,
 And no man spake of bad or good;
 For in the midst of them there stood
 A white-clad woman, white as though
 A piece of fair moonlighten snow
 Had entered the red smoky hall;
 Then sweet speech on their ears did fall,
 Thrilling all hearts through:

'Joy and peace
 Be on this house, and all increase
 Of all good things! and thou, my love,
 I knew how sore desire must move
 Thy longing heart, and I am come
 To look upon thee in thy home:
 Come to me, give me welcome here!'

He stepped adown, and shame and fear,
 Mixed with the joyful agony
 Of love and longing, as a sigh
 He drew unto her loveliness.
 A moment, and his arms did press
 His own love to his heaving breast,
 And for an instant of sweet rest,
 'Midst clinging hands and trembling kiss,
 Did he forget all things but bliss,
 And still she murmured:

' Now rejoice
That far away I heard thy voice,
And came! rejoice this night at least,
And make good ending to the feast!'
Therewith from out his arms she drow,
Yet held his hand still; scarce he knew
Of where he was, and who were round,
And strange and flat his voice did sound
Unto himself, as now he spake:

' Kinsmen, see her, who for my sake
Has left her mighty state and home,
Fair beyond words, that she might come
With you a little to abide!
How say ye? are ye satisfied,
Her sweet face in your midst to see!'

Therewith, though somewhat timidly,
Folk shouted; sooth, they deemed her such
As mortal man might scarcely touch
Or dare to love; with fear fulfilled,
With shame of their rough joyance chilled,
They sat, scarce moving; but to John
Some sweet familiar thing seemed won
Despite his fear, as down the hall
He led her.

Now softly to the fair high seat
With trembling hand he led his sweet,
Who kissed the goodman and goodwife,
And wished them fair and happy life;
Then like the earth's and heaven's queen,
She sat there beauteous and serene,
Till, as men gazed upon her there,
Joy of her beauty slew their fear;
Hot grew their hearts now, as they turned
Eyes on her that with strange light burned;
And wild and eager grew the speech
Wherewith they praised her each to each,
As 'neath her eyes they sat.

If he
Who knew the full felicity
Of all they longed for, hushed at whiles,
Might answer not her healing smiles
With aught but sad imploring eyes,
When he bethought him in what wise
She there was come—yet none the less
Amid bewildered happiness
The time went by; until at last
Night waned, and slowly all folk passed
From out the hall, and the soft sleep
O'er all the marvelling house did creep,
Bearing to folk that night such dreams,
As showed, through wild things, very
gleams
Of heaven and perfect love, to last
Till grey light o'er the world was cast."

The result of this unfortunate call upon the spirit-bride is, that she is banished to a land of strange unconsciousness and insensibility *East of the sun, west of the moon*—where at length, however, her lover finds her, and arouses her out of her trance by the same warmth of love which had wrought her harm. Sweet and wistful, like the very echo of a dream, is this strange tale. "The man who never laughed again" is,

though much more melancholy, of the same description; and though Eastern in manner and vague splendour of description, is essentially Gothic in its inspiration. The story of "Rhodope," however, which is intended to be classical, fails in many of the points in which, in his former classical poems, Mr Morris was so successful. The atmosphere is not Greek, but northern; the house of the priest of Jove might almost be a farm-stead in the Norseland, with its grey elms and "meads with oaks beset," and the rocks and daws in its pine-woods; neither is Rhodope herself a primitive classical maiden, but a much-musing modern one, thinking upon her thought, and considering her fate almost as much as if she had been the heroine of a new novel. This is a strange departure from that curious unquestioning directness and simplicity, acceptance of the strangest facts without discussion of them, and matter-of-fact assent to the wildest conditions, which Mr Morris so perfectly caught in several of his classic narratives in the former volumes. Atalanta's love, for instance, wins that troublesome young woman, and takes possession of her with triumph, without pausing to ask himself whether it was "nice" of her to have outrun and procured the death of all those unlucky wooers—which is a question he would certainly have put to himself had he been born in the nineteenth century; and the skill of the poet could not be more clearly shown than by thus acknowledging the utter difference between the ancient and the modern mind. But Rhodope must have been brought into this world somewhere in the eighteen-thirties, we should say, at the very earliest, and questions herself about herself as much as one of Miss Brontë's young ladies, or any of their free-spoken successors. She is more modest a great deal, but she is not more contented. Space does not permit us to discuss the longest tale of all, the story of Gudrun and her lovers. The volume

altogether is perhaps scarcely up to the level of the former volumes, and it has no longer the first freshness of that novel gift of poetical storytelling, not philosophical, nor analytical, nor anything but narrative, which was such a delight to encounter among all the "thoughtful" and heavy works of the age. It is a perennial delight, and perhaps the one of all others of which the world is least likely to tire; but yet Mr Morris must remember that the sweet monotony and dreamy harmonious lingering of the strain is apt to weary the multitude, which has not time for those subtle fitnesses of style and atmosphere which are the highest enjoyment of art; and it is for the multitude—not for the critic, nor the amateur, nor that limited class which alone has leisure and capacity to enter fully into a poet's finer meanings—that the poet ought primarily to write. He must satisfy their broader, larger, more simple judgment, not neglecting the others; for unless it is in him to charm the common mind as well as the refined, no poet can reach any real greatness.

We feel disposed to remind several of the favourite writers of the public in another department of literature—in that branch which has, in many respects, taken the place of poetry among us, the art of fiction—of a defect not exactly like that of Mr Morris, but producing a somewhat similar effect. The monotony of repetition is a different kind of monotony from that which is correctly expressed by the word *monotone*. A man may tell us a great many stories in monotone, and yet be always original and varied in what he tells—in which case the measure and cadence may distress us, but not the flatness of conception, nor any want of material excellence as distinguished from excellence of expression. But to go over the same ground and reproduce the same kind of scene over and over, is a mistake which sooner or later

will bear its own punishment. It is not a mistake when the mind we have to deal with is that of a great genius, limited in breadth but illimitable in depth, like that, for instance, of George Eliot, from whom we know beforehand we have no great variety to expect, but only different developments of a few characters, the leading figures which it is evident fill up the foreground of human life to that great writer, capable of any amount of expansion within themselves, but not of addition from without. Such an author produces comparatively little, and it is in nature that her great efforts should be impressed upon the mind of the world, if not by repetition, at least by reproduction; but this is not the case, for instance, with respect to Mr Trollope's vivacious and inexhaustible imagination, from which out of mere idleness he is throwing forth upon us the same characters, the same situations, with a certain contempt for the public which has been so faithful to him. Why should he have abandoned those earlier, sweeter, charming young women, of whose thoughts and ways and fancies his comprehension was so wonderful, to toss us about with all the doubts and tribulations of a Nora Rowley or a Mary Lowther, girls whose marriage out of hand to anybody would rejoice the reader, only to get rid of their endless fluctuations and rebounds from one to another? Among all the indecencies of the time, there is nothing more marked than this necessity, manifested by every young lady in every novel, to have a lover on hand at every moment, and to permit no vacuum between one and another. Mr Charles Reade, to the wild indignation of half the novel-readers in England, has just permitted his heroine to contract a marriage (or supposed marriage) with a second lover *only five months* after her first one is supposed to be killed. And Mr Trollope encourages his heroine to en-

gage herself to a man she cares nothing for in less than that interval after the breaking-off of her engagement with the man she loves; not to say that he permits her to throw off the first unfortunate the moment the other again holds out his hand to her. We protest against such utter indecorum. Even though the exigencies of the tale may seem to demand it, and the story might fail altogether but for the interposition of the impropriety, we object strenuously to the repeated use of such a poor expedient. Mr Trollope is always amusing, always interesting, when he pleases to take the trouble—and of course he knows it; but we have no patience with his Mary Lowthers. If it is to be that we are never to see Archdeacon Grantley again, nor enter the peaceful palace where Mrs Proudie reigns no more, we hope we know how to submit without any unseemly exhibition of impatience; but we decline to put up with the disagreeable young women who first accept one man and then another, and toss, not their hearts perhaps, but their hands, their kisses, their proprietorship, from one to another with a painful promiscuousness. We may acknowledge that the love-tale, which is so short a chapter in real life, is in reality the one most interesting to the general world, and has the greatest genuine attraction both for old and young; did we say anything else, the balance of evidence would, we fear, be against us: but then it must be a real love-story. And we decline to believe that a history of how Miss or Mr Somebody managed to get married is at all the same thing. It is hard for us to say a word against a writer from whom we have received so much amusement; but we must entreat of him to consider his ways—to take a thought and mend—to go back upon his original canons, and to free us of the Mary Lowthers. The less we hear about such people the better, if there are, as we suppose there are, such people in the world.

And we have just half-a-dozen words in passing to say to a young author who ought not yet for years to come to have required such an admonition at our hands. The author of 'The Village on the Cliff' is aware that Maga has not been slow to appreciate her charming gift. But Maga droops her head over the little bits of unsustained and careless work with which she is suffering a fine talent to be frittered away. A pretty description of here and there a pretty domestic scene—an effect of sky, or trees, or sunny lawn, with a few figures relieved against them—these are very nice things to hang on the walls of a boudoir, but they do not even help to make a great picture. They are so pretty, and it must be so pleasant to do them, that the critic feels harsh and unkind for venturing upon such a remark. But still it is true. It is allowable for people whose strength is waning, or for people who have no particular strength at all, to collect baskets of fragments for the amusement of the public, and make use of every scrap they write. But such a mode of proceeding is bad for a young and promising writer. Miss Thackeray ought to be able to afford to let those wayside flowers drop from her hands, if she likes to produce them, instead of staking or rather risking her fame upon a bundle of little stories which have answered their purpose. She is capable of something more, surely—something better; and her fame may be as evanescent as it has been great, if she leaves it to repose solely upon the three beautiful little books which are like a portfolio of the most charming sketches, but which, nevertheless, have dipped very little into the real depths of life and art. In her last sketches there is just the dawning of a suspicion that the pretty pictures are growing fixed and set, and the spontaneity and appropriateness going out of them. This would be so melancholy a conclusion to so much promise, that we cannot but pause on the way to de-

liver one word of warning. Water-colours are very charming, but life is deeper than water-colours, and a writer differs from a member of the Society in Suffolk Street in a great many ways. The nature of the profession is different; the effect is less rapidly produced; the effort has to be more continuous; and when the talent is equal to that of the author of 'Elizabeth,' perhaps we may be permitted to say that even out of plain pen and ink we have a right to expect a fine result.

Having delivered our conscience, however, we will wind up with two books which are not of the usual character of novels, but may be described rather as belonging to the old school of fiction than to the new. Mr Dasent's 'Annals of an Eventful Life' has been so well praised that we confess frankly to having approached it with a certain suspicion. Here, we said to ourselves, is another book *written up*. But, for once, prejudice was wrong and the newspapers right. It is not profound, nor touching, nor eloquent, to speak of,—but it is amusing; and we read it without feeling any of that shame of ourselves which fills us when we look up from a few hours' absorption in a book which is all about the self-made distresses of some pair of young fools whom personally we should be disposed to whip and send to bed, were they in our hands. We will not assert, either, that the life is very eventful of which these annals are written; but it certainly has one big plot in it, not at all badly managed, and is written in the kind of clever monologue, full of digressions and allusions of all kinds, which conveys to us the impression that we have been talking with a clever agreeable companion, who is so good as to tell us, not only his love-story, but a good deal about the world in general, and how a man can get on in it. The hero is sadly weak-minded in the beginning of his troubles, but he does not surely deserve the utter downfall that comes upon him.

His letters are intercepted—a common enough device, but managed this time in a sufficiently clever and original way; but he is really very little to blame in the matter; and it is hard upon the poor fellow that he should thus lose not only his love and his fortune, but even the chance of setting himself right with the kind woman who has been a mother to him, and who is allowed to die without knowing how badly used and simply unfortunate the silly boy had been. As for Arcthusa, we cannot say that we regret the loss of her half so much as we do that of Aunt Mandeville. She is another of the young ladies who make such rapid progress in their love-affairs, being actually married to the schemer three months after the date of her engagement to the true lover. Everybody, in short, gives up poor Edward with the most extraordinary speed. Three months are enough to shake the faith of everybody belonging to him; even his aunt, who adores him, gives him up and leaves her fortune to his enemy, and dies of a broken heart, all in less than a quarter of a year. Things do not go so fast in ordinary life. But notwithstanding this mistake, the 'Annals of an Eventful Life' is a book which belongs to the same class as those which rose in the immediate shadow of Sir Walter—the stories of life rather than of love, which were the delight of our youth.

Still more remarkable, though perhaps not so amusing, nor so likely to be popular, is the book called 'Wenderholme.' It is a story of Yorkshire, with all the fresh originality about it of an un-hackneyed and primitive race. The Ogden family, with its wealth and its peculiarities, its sound family affection, and rational, unsentimental treatment of its difficulties, is as clever a piece of character-painting as we have seen for a long time. It is impossible to go into the story, which is perhaps of less importance to the book than a story, strictly speaking, ought to be; but the

fresh life and reality of the novel world thus opened to us, is infinitely refreshing after all the love-making, true and false, and seeing between one man and another, or one woman and another—or even than the series of experiments how far a young woman can go without losing her character or her lover—with which we are perpetually edified. No lady walks into any gentleman's bedroom, or is guilty of any other impropriety, throughout the whole course of the book, and thus one fine source of excitement is thrown away. But the struggles of Isaac Ogden with himself in the dreary solitude of Twistle Farm, may to some people supply a more intense if graver kind of interest. There is in it a certain reflection from the wild early works of the Brontë family in their dealings with the dalemen; but it is infinitely less repulsive, and more natural. Mr Hamerton introduces us not to one pair of lovers, with a little circle of spiteful or friendly spectators round them, existing solely on their account, but to a whole breadth of country full of people who are none of them perfect, but most of whom have a great deal of good about them—a picture which is much more like what we see in the ordinary daylight, and perhaps, on the whole, more consistent with human character than the other ideal of existence. We quote the following sketch of Jacob Ogden as an example of his powers in portrait-painting:—

“His annual outlay upon literature was within twenty shillings; not that it is to be supposed that he spent so large a sum as one pound sterling in a regular manner upon books, but he had been tempted by a second-hand copy of Baines's ‘History of Lancashire,’ which, being much the worse for wear, had been marked by the bookseller at five pounds, and Jacob Ogden, by hard bargaining, had got it for four pounds nine shillings and ninepence. After this extravagance he resolved to spend no more ‘foolish money,’ as he called

it, and for several years made no addition to his library, except a book on dog-breeding, and a small treatise on the preservation of game, which he rightly entered amongst his expenses as a sportsman. We are far from desiring to imply that Jacob Ogden is in this respect to be considered a representative example of the present generation of cotton-manufacturers, many of whom are highly-educated men; but he may be fairly taken as a specimen of that generation which founded the colossal fortunes that excite the wonder, and sometimes, perhaps, awaken the envy, of the learned. When nature produces a creature for some especial purpose, she does not burden it with wants and desires that would scatter its force and impair its efficiency. The industrial epoch had to be inaugurated, the manufacturing districts had to be created—and to do this, a body of men were needed who should be fresh springs of pure energy, and reservoirs of all but illimitable capital; men who should act with the certainty and steadiness of natural instincts which have never been impaired by the hesitations of culture and philosophy—men who were less nearly related to university professors than to the ant, and the beaver, and the bee. And if any cultivated and intellectual reader, in the thoughtful retirement of his library, feels himself superior to Jacob Ogden, the illiterate cotton-spinner, he may be reminded that he is not on all points Ogden's superior. We are all but tools in the hands of God; and as in the mind of a writer great delicacy and flexibility are necessary qualities for the work he appointed to do, so in the mind of great captain of industry the most valuable qualities may be the very opposite of these. Have we the energy, the directness, the singleness of purpose, the unflinching steadiness in the dulllest possible labour, that mark the typical industrial chief? We know that we have not; we know that these qualities are not compatible with the tranquillity of the studious temperament and the meditative life. And if the Ogdens cannot be men of letters, neither can the men of letters be Ogdens.

“It is admitted, then, that Jacob Ogden was utterly and irreclaimably illiterate. He really never read a book in his life, except, perhaps, that book on dog-breaking. Whenever he tried to read, it was a task and a labour to him; and as literature is not of the

least use in the cotton trade, the energy of his indomitable will had never been brought to bear upon the mastery of a book. And yet you could not meet him without feeling that he was very intelligent—that he possessed a kind of intelligence cultivated by the closest observation of the men and things within the narrow circle of his life. Has it never occurred to the reader how wonderfully the most illiterate people often impress us with a sense of their intelligence—how men and women who never learned the alphabet have its light on their countenance and in their eyes? In Ogden's face there were clear signs of that, and of other qualities also. And there was a keenness in the glance quite different from the penetration of the thinker or the artist—a keenness which always comes from excessively close and minute attention to money matters, and from the passionate love of money, and which no other passion or occupation ever produces.

"In all that related to money, Jacob Ogden acted with the pitiless regularity of the irresistible forces of nature. As the sea which feeds the fisherman will drown him without remorse—as the air which we all breathe will bury us under heaps of ruin—so this man, though his capital enabled a multitude to live, would take the bed from under a sick debtor, and, rather than lose an

imperceptible atom of his fortune, inflict the utmost extremity of misery. Even Hanby, his attorney, who was by no means tender-hearted, had been staggered at times by his pitilessness, and had ventured upon a feeble remonstrance. On these occasions a shade of sternness was added to the keenness of Ogden's face, and he repeated a terrible maxim, which, with one or two others, guided his life: 'If a man means to be rich, he must have no fine feelings;' and then he would add, 'I mean to be rich.'"

Time does not permit us to enter more into the novels of the day, though their name is legion. The two which we have instanced have this in common, that they are not like the novels of the day, but belong to a different, and, we are disposed to believe, more wholesome, if less exciting, class of fiction. On another occasion we shall return to the more ordinary tenor of contemporary literature, in this its most fruitful and productive branch—that literature which is more the product of the times than its guide—an indication of what is, rather than an influence for shaping what is to be.

THE EDUCATION DIFFICULTY.

THE present movement in the direction of National Education is certainly one of the most remarkable features of the age through which we are passing. Many of us are old enough to remember when the phrase—"The schoolmaster is abroad"—was used somewhat derisively. It was pointed at the Utopian schemes, as they were then considered, of a few educational enthusiasts who wanted to send all the world to school. Even at an earlier date, good King George III. was said to have expressed a wish that every man in his dominions should be able to read his Bible and have a Bible to read; but, like another benevolent wish said to have proceeded from a French king's lips—that every man should have a fowl to boil in his pot (and, we suppose, a pot to boil it in)—these aspirations were classed by the majority of their unsympathising subjects in the same category of things impossible. Those who read the biographies of the earlier apostles of education, such as Hannah More and Raikes of Chester, almost within the present century, cannot fail to be struck with the remarkable contrast between the state of public feeling on such points then and now. Church and State appeared then alike indifferent to the mental training of their children. The "National Society for the Education of the Poor" has had barely sixty years of existence; and it was not until the year 1833 that a timid and half-reluctant Parliament made the first public grant of £20,000 for building schools. As to anything like a demand for education on the part of those who were to be educated, not even its most enthusiastic promoters were so visionary as to expect it. It would have been held about as reasonable to expect from the children themselves, when suffering

under measles or hooping-cough, a demand to be physicked and put to bed.

We have changed all that now. While the educational Mahomet has been making gradual and tentative advances towards the mountain, the mountain has all on a sudden come to Mahomet; and Mahomet, apparently, is somewhat puzzled and overwhelmed at the unexpected movement. The working man, whom philanthropists of all shades of opinion had so long been coaxing to come and be taught, has suddenly—if we may trust those who profess to represent his feelings and opinions—risen up and demanded, not only that he shall be taught, but that he shall be compelled to learn.

Such a position of things is, to say the least, very curious. If the working classes really wish that their children should be educated, what need is there for them to demand an Act of Parliament which shall compel them, under peril of fine or imprisonment, to send them to school? That they should demand help and assistance from the State for this purpose, one can very well understand; but what need of compulsion for those who are willing? As a rule (especially in the towns, whence we are told the cry chiefly comes) the class is rather fond of independence, and looks with somewhat unfriendly eyes upon the interference of the law in any way with their private and domestic arrangements. The orderly and respectable labourer or artisan has a very natural and praiseworthy dislike to being brought into contact with the law's representative in a policeman's uniform; while the disorderly of the class maintain a still more jealous dislike of such functionaries, and have hitherto stood up stoutly for those privileges of an Englishman,

dear to him long before household suffrage was thought of,—the right to “wallop his own donkey,” and bring up his children in such ignorance as pleases him. Whence comes this sudden revolution in the national British mind?

So far as it is real, it may be attributed to the gradual dawning upon the minds of the uneducated or half-educated masses of the truth that “knowledge is power.” We were warned, after the late political crisis, half ironically, that we should have to educate our future masters; and all at once our masters—if such indeed they are to be—have endorsed the proposition emphatically for themselves. Some of the clearer-headed and more earnest politicians among the working men have, no doubt, an honest appreciation of the fact that the inferiority of their education places them at a disadvantage as compared with the classes above them, in spite of a nominal equality in their political rights; especially as it effects one of their most cherished objects, that of placing at least some few individuals of their own order among the national representatives in Parliament.

But this does not explain the cry for compulsion. There would be no need for any pressure to induce men of this type to send their children to school. That this cry proceeds really from any large proportion of working men, may in fact be more than doubted. It is raised by a few prominent leaders, and taken up, as any cry raised by them would be, by an unreasoning multitude, many of whom would be loud in their protests against such compulsion if it had been proposed from any other quarter, and will be loud hereafter in their complaints, if such proposition should ever become law. There are also two motives which may have considerable share in a demand which, coming from the quarter it does, appears at first sight so unaccountable. Compulsion, in any direct

form, means free education. It will be hardly possible for any legislation to compel the working man to send his children to school *and* to pay for them. It will be quite hard enough for such a parent, in many cases, to forego his children's possible earnings, even if the education is offered him without cost. Take the case of a labouring man with a family, earning, say thirteen shillings a-week,—which is taking by no means a low average of agricultural wages. Suppose such a man to have two boys between the ages of nine and twelve. He can probably obtain employment for both; and a compulsory educational law is to deprive him of the five or six shillings a-week which their united wages would add to his own earnings, and to oblige him at the same time to pay the weekly pence to the schoolmaster. A supplementary Act of Parliament will have to be passed, somewhat after the fashion of Jack Cade's legislation, which shall enact “that seven halfpenny loaves shall be sold for a penny;” otherwise the boys are likely to be better taught than fed. Compulsion, then, brought to bear upon the day-labourer with his twelve or fourteen shillings of weekly wage, means free education, out of the public pocket, for the son of the artisan who is earning from thirty to fifty; and for whom, we must remember, such education will have an actual money-value, in introducing him to higher branches of skilled labour.

Compulsory education, then, means free schools; and free schools must be established by rate, and supported by rate; and schools so established and so supported must, it is argued, and with some show of fairness, be secular, or as nearly secular as may be. Therefore the secular party—unhappily a large and powerful party in our large towns, and more than proportionately noisy and aggressive—have helped with all their energy to swell this cry for

compulsion, in the hope that when free secular schools have been once established, they will, in the nature of things, starve out in course of time all schools at which any payment is demanded, and become the rule instead of the exception throughout the country.

The moderate and well-considered measure which Mr Forster has introduced, does not embody either of these principles. It does not encourage, though it does not forbid, the foundation of secular schools; nor does it recognise compulsion except as a last resort, in cases where the local public opinion would thoroughly support the application of a remedy which is sure, *prima facie*, to be unpopular. Compulsion left optional with local boards would, it is admitted on all hands, be very sparingly exercised. It might be brought to bear occasionally upon a family whose vagrant and predatory habits made the children a nuisance to the parish, to be abated so far as possible by the schoolmaster; quite as exceptional a case as that which is quoted as a precedent (surely most unfairly) by the advocates of compulsory education—the sending children of the same class, who have broken out into actual crime, to a reformatory, and taxing the parents for their support. But to suppose that in the rural districts, boys of ten and twelve years of age are to be hunted up out of the fields and farmyards and driven to school, or that the father of a family is to be “had up” before the nearest squire and fined or imprisoned for letting them go to work, when work is to be had and he has their hungry mouths to feed, implies a faith in the power of law merely as law, when neither founded on reason nor supported by the public opinion of those on whom it acts, which the experience of past legislation will hardly justify.

This question of compulsion, however, is one which will answer itself in the end. If it does not get

itself settled by some fair compromise in a committee of the House, it will be settled in practice by the common-sense of all classes alike. The parson—who is generally credited with all disagreeable duties which concern the education of the poor in country places—will not be found an eager ally of the law which substitutes fine and imprisonment for the moral suasion which he has been used to employ in the case of recusants; and the employers of labour will hardly act as literary policemen. The real difficulty, and the present battle-field of parties, is the religious, or, looking at it from another point of view, the “irreligious” question.

At present, most schools for the education of the working classes have what is called a “denominational” character,—that is, they are in connection with some religious body, whether Church of England, Nonconformist, or Roman Catholic. The penny or twopence a-week paid by the parents for each child, does not supply more than one-third of the cost of the education in any efficient school; and the remaining two-thirds have to be made up either wholly by private benevolence, or partly by a grant from the Committee of Council. These schools have been built originally in the same way,—by private subscription, aided in most cases by a grant of public money. The trust-deeds of these schools have placed them under certain managers, and they are recognised as belonging to that religious denomination by whom they were built, and in whom the management is vested. Religious instruction is given in them according to the creed and discipline of such denomination; guarded, in most cases where a grant of public money has been given, by a “conscience clause,” as it is termed, which allows any parent who may be of a different creed to withdraw his child, by formal notice, from the religious teaching. Of these elementary

schools, the vast majority have been founded, and are in the main supported, so far as the voluntary subscriptions go, by members of the Church of England, though very largely used by the children of Nonconformist parents. The reason for this has lain partly, no doubt, in the greater wealth of the individual members of the Church of England,—partly in the fact that the Nonconformists have thrown their efforts rather upon their Sunday-schools,—but partly also in the greater importance attached to general education by churchmen, as a more generally educated body, and their consequently more active zeal in promoting it. The unreformed Church has been reproached with a desire to keep the masses in ignorance; it is a reproach which is to a great extent very unfair even as against the medieval Church; but it must be a very unscrupulous antagonist who would venture to bring it against the Church of England of the nineteenth century.

Hitherto this concordat in the matter of religious education has been very generally acquiesced in. When the Nonconformists were not numerous enough, or not rich enough, to found distinct schools for themselves, they were content with the security of the "conscience clause," which protected their children from the doctrine to which they objected; or—far more frequently—they were either indifferent in the matter, or had the good sense to understand that very little distinction could be made, in the teaching of a child of eight or ten years old, between one denomination of Christians and another. Those who were really conscientious in their nonconformity were content to leave any distinctive doctrines to the Sunday-school and the chapel; and a very considerable proportion both of nominal Churchmen and nominal Dissenters were very indifferent to any such distinctive teaching at all.

When, therefore, by the present Education Bill, it was proposed to leave all existing schools unaffected as to their religious basis, except so far as to insist henceforward on the universal acceptance of a "conscience clause" as an absolute condition of any public money—a step in favour of the Nonconformists—to allow schools to be established, if desired, upon a strictly secular basis, and to give them an equal claim to public aid, and to allow the future "school board" in any district or parish to choose their own religious (or nonreligious) basis of management for any new school to be founded or supported by public rate,—it might have seemed, and did seem at first, that all parties, except Churchmen of a very uncompromising stamp, would be as fairly satisfied as it was possible for parties of such discordant views to be satisfied with any moderate measure.

But there had been a strong party already formed, who had laid down for themselves a programme of a national education which was to be compulsory, supported by rate (supplemented by Government grant), free of charge to parents, and—as a necessary consequence—unsectarian. These may be briefly but not unfairly stated as the broad principles of the Birmingham "National Education League;" because, although it did not profess to interfere with such denominational schools as are now in existence, it must be clear enough to any comprehension that in course of time the free schools would starve out all schools where payment was demanded, in almost every locality.

Different interpretations seem to have been put by the various members of the League on the word "unsectarian." Some held it to mean the teaching of something which was called "Common Christianity"—a somewhat impalpable creed, supposed to be entertained by all apparently because confessed by none—which would exclude

catechisms and formularies. Others wished to understand by it the reading of the Scriptures in the school without note or comment; others boldly declared it must correspond to the word "secular." As a matter of party tactics, this vagueness of interpretation has been found convenient. As Mr Richards, the member for Merthyr, and one of the representative men of the Nonconformists, frankly confessed, "there was a difference of opinion among themselves, and they thought by using the two words they might get over the difficulty." Accordingly, the alternative explanations have been given by the different writers and speakers of the party, according as the religious dissenter or the indifferent secularist has to be propitiated and enrolled. But this latter section of the party, though not the most numerous, are the most outspoken and energetic; too much so, probably, in the opinion of their half-hearted allies. The cause was not much strengthened when, at the interview of the League deputation with Mr Gladstone, upon the Minister attempting to ascertain what were the limitations under which they would admit the teaching of Holy Scripture, he was answered from the extreme left of the party with shouts of "No Scriptures at all!" The veil was lifted, too, rather prematurely, by Mr Mill at St James's Hall, when he spoke plainly of his hope of the "ultimate absorption" of all schools where distinct religious teaching was permitted, into "something" which he and his party "could more cordially approve," and when he made the outrageous proposition, that those who wished to have their children religiously educated should be "free to found schools of their own," while those who would consent to ignore religion altogether should alone be entitled to national aid. Even the 'Times' was roused to characterise this proposal in

words at least as strong as any we should care to use, as "a conspicuous illustration of the flagrant one-sidedness of illiberal liberalism."*

But with such allies as these a large majority of Nonconformists have allowed themselves to unite, simply because they saw, or thought they saw, an opportunity for crippling the missionary work of the Church of England. We are told that no less than five thousand one hundred and seventy-three Nonconformist ministers have petitioned against the religious clauses of the Bill, which stand as we have briefly stated. The movement has been by no means spontaneous: it has been entered into with manifest reluctance by many sections of Dissenters, notably by the Wesleyan Methodists. But Nonconformity is just at present in a state of very complete organisation (such as Churchmen may well envy) for political purposes, and fresh from some political triumphs. The order was passed from headquarters, and the names were given in. But even still there are not wanting symptoms of some dissatisfaction in many quarters of the camp, both with the plan of campaign and the company in which they are to march.

The Church party have as yet been remarkably passive in the question, as a body. Some honest and outspoken members of it, who have consistently advocated Church schools pure and simple, and resisted the imposition of a conscience clause of any kind, object to Mr Forster's scheme, because it makes the adoption of some such clause a condition hereafter of any money aid either from Government grants or local rates. Such men deserve to be spoken of with all honour, as having been in many cases conspicuous for their zeal and self-denial in the work of education. They form but a small minority of the clergy, but they number in their

* 'Times,' March 26.

ranks some of its best men. But they are surely captives to a theory. The theory is true enough in itself, and is not very unfairly expressed in words by the Society of Arts Commissioner, though that gentleman quotes it with evident disapproval—"that the Church of England clergy are the hereditary instructors of the poor." There certainly was a time—and not so very long ago—when they were at least almost the only instructors, and when very few were disposed to help them, or to dispute their claim, so long as they were willing to find the time and the money, and when Church reformers would have been loud in their complaints of negligence against the idle parsons who neglected this duty in their several parishes. Those who now dispute this claim find it convenient to forget all this, and to forget also that a national Church is necessarily older than any phase of Nonconformity. There was even an Act of Parliament which forbade any person to "instruct or teach any youth before licence obtained from the archbishop or bishop" of the diocese. It is true that, practically, this hereditary right has lapsed. Yet surely, to this day, the minister of a national Church enters upon his sphere of duty in a very narrow spirit—which might be much more fitly described as sectarian than a good deal which goes by that name—unless he does look upon himself as the religious educator of every soul within the limits of his parish. He is bound to teach them—if they will be taught. Nay, if he be a man of any moderate power himself, he does educate them, more or less. He brings out their faculties, and warms them into activity, even if it be sometimes in opposition to himself. Those who never listen to his teaching are influenced by it nevertheless. The preaching at the chapel has to be kept up to the mark, when the church pulpit is occupied by a man of any character and power. If the day ever comes

when we lose the services of an educated national clergy, and are handed over to a body of religious teachers who are formed by "natural selection," the national religion and the national character will suffer grievously from the loss of these "hereditary" educators. There will be no longer any mean between fanaticism and indifference. But the same theory which claims for this clergy this duty and privilege of national education, must rest also on the parallel assumption, that schools are built, endowed, and supported exclusively by members of the national Church. So long as this is the case, we suppose that not even the League itself would object to the teaching in such schools being exclusively Church teaching. But when religious unity has been broken, and when the funds which are to support a common education are to be drawn either by way of rate or otherwise from the pockets of those who dissent from the Church, it is but reasonable that they should be allowed, if they please, to withdraw their own children from its distinctive teaching, while they have still a right to avail themselves of the secular public education which is thus provided. The clergyman who still insists upon looking on his parish, under the full glare of this nineteenth century, as an unbroken and harmonious whole, is far too sublime a theorist to have much weight in those practical discussions which must always have for their object, not the best conceivable, but the best attainable.

But unfortunately, perhaps, in onesense, for the interests of Church education, it is this particular school of opinion which alone seems to have marked out for itself a distinct and consistent line of conduct. They would still object, as they have long objected, to any limitation of Church teaching in Church schools. The far more numerous body who would be inclined to accept a fair compromise, in the shape of a conscience

clause or otherwise, are too much divided at present among themselves, although the sense of a common danger from the inroad of secularism is now beginning, it may be hoped, to draw the various shades of opinion so far together as to admit of common action. The National Society, which ought in this matter to represent the calm and moderate mind of the Church, has apparently hesitated as to what course to take, and seems, from time to time, to shift its ground. It has taken objection to points of comparatively little importance in the present Bill—such as the withdrawal in future of any inquiry, on the part of Government inspectors, into the religious instruction of the school, which may surely be safely trusted in most cases to its natural guardians, the parish clergy; and to the wording of the clause which requires a parent's objection to any portion of the teaching to be made "on religious grounds," "because" (as they say) "the managers cannot decide upon the parents' motives;" a task undoubtedly beyond the powers of any man, manager or not, and surely never meant to be imposed: but once admit the parent's right to withdraw his child at all, and he alone must be left responsible for the sincerity of his objection. The last manifesto which we have seen from the Society appears to imply that such objections will not be insisted on, and directs its opposition now to the last compromise as to a conscience clause, as indicated by Mr Gladstone. A resolution has been passed declaring that there are "grave objections to any system by which religious instruction shall be confined by a rigorous time-table to particular hours."

Yet perhaps most moderate men would admit that, granting the principle of such a clause itself, the best way of putting it in operation really and honestly is by fixing a definite hour, known to the parent from the first, at which such teach-

ing is given, so that during that time the child may, if he desires it, be wholly withdrawn from the school. For such a clause will take effect, in the most numerous instances, in small places where there is only one school; in the larger towns, where all denominations are strongly represented, there will probably be distinct schools, each aided by rate or by a Government grant, where such a clause will be almost superfluous. In the smaller schools there will often be only one teacher; and unless the child has the opportunity of being altogether withdrawn at certain times, he can hardly be really separated from the teaching; he must hear it, in many cases, and, as has been very fairly said, will be apt to listen all the more curiously if he understands it is something which he is not to attend to. The real objection felt to this "time-table" clause, as it is called, comes to this; that it seems to separate religion altogether from the regular daily work, and forbids that atmosphere of religious tone and feeling which all earnest teachers would wish to pervade their school at all hours. But this may be an unfounded apprehension. If the teacher is a religious man, this tone will be kept up amongst his scholars, so far as he is able, in spite of all restrictions upon his definite teaching; and if he is not a religious man, it will not be kept up even during the positive religious lesson. But no Act of Parliament will ever make it a condition that all national teachers shall be atheists, or can guard even the child of an atheist from the contagion of a Christian teacher. The most that can be done for him is that he shall be exempted from direct instruction in the truths of Christianity: its spirit, both he and the National Society may rest assured, will pervade many a school during every hour of its time-table.

Are those who advocate exclusively secular teaching in our week-

day schools really aware of the destructive effects which their system would have, if it should ever be carried out into practice? In their zeal for this forced education of the masses, do they ever calculate the amount of energy and interest in the cause of education which they are positively discouraging and shutting out?

It is not merely the money question—it is not merely the flow of private benevolence which will be checked at once by this dry hard system of rate-established schools, though a branch of educational revenue which has hitherto contributed at least one-third of the cost of schools for the poor is worth consideration, one would think, as a matter of political economy—but they will be sacrificing, besides, what no money could buy, the warm personal interest in the cause, the active superintendence and encouragement which the teachers need as well as the children—which the earnest and zealous master looks for and appreciates, and which the careless master requires. Mr Forster honestly admits that if the exclusion of religion banishes the clergy from our schools, he, “for one, should not know how to replace them.” But, it may be asked, why should not the same or an equal amount of personal interest and superintendence be bestowed by benevolent persons upon secular schools? Why should not those who have the means and the leisure still put into practice the advice which the poet gives to his imaginary Lady Clara—

“Go teach the orphan boy to read,
Or teach the orphan girl to sew”!

Simply because such teaching is seldom taken up in earnest except by those who have also a strong conviction that life was not given, even to such children, entirely for reading and sewing; because those who are willing to devote their time and money to such work do,

as a rule, undertake it in a religious spirit; and because the same feeling which prompts them to the discharge of this Christian duty towards their less fortunate fellow-creatures, would lead them also to impress upon those whom they teach, as the basis of all teaching, their own duties to God and man. Men may call this fanatical, sectarian, narrow-minded, or by what name they will; but it is this feeling which has already carried the light of education into the dark places of our manufacturing towns and of our country villages, not as thoroughly and universally, indeed, as it would have wished and desired, but to an extent which would never have been reached by any other agency. The sudden awakening of this secular zeal for enlightenment has something about it which in a less serious matter would be actually ludicrous. If education is, as we are now so loudly told, the one thing needful, the right and privilege of every child in the nation, how comes it that up to this moment it has been left almost entirely in the hands of the “sects” and the “denominations” to promote it? Where have the secular apostles been all this time? Is it to their zeal, their self-denial, their time, or their money, that the working classes of England are indebted for such education as they have had any time this fifty years?

But it is not the clergy only who are the present voluntary educators. Take the common case of a school in a country village. Hitherto, under the present system, the rector's wife, or the squire's daughters, or both, as the case may be, look in from time to time. There is very little dogmatic teaching on their part. Such religion as they teach there, is, in a “denominational” point of view, of a very harmless character. Indeed, if that very abstract form of religion which is now in so many mouths as “our common Christianity” exists anywhere at all

in the concrete, it would probably be found in a Scripture lesson given by one of these volunteer professors. Nay, even in some secular branches of learning, we can conceive that a rigid observance of formularies could not be fairly charged against them. Ladies' arithmetic, for instance, we have generally found to be of a highly undenominational character. But there enters into a school, along with such teachers, an atmosphere of gentleness and refinement which the little scholars breathe, as they do the physical atmosphere, without being sensible of the process or its effects. It is what not one trained master or mistress in a thousand, with all the zeal and good intentions in the world, can give. There will be a silent education going on in every school open to such influences, which is by no means limited to the three stereotyped heads of Government requirement. It is an instruction which cannot be supplied out of any rate that can be levied, and which no minutes of "My Lords" of the Privy Council can secure. It is an education of the finer senses, in which the children of the poor are no more naturally deficient than our own, but which are so constantly obscured and blunted, and often wholly obliterated, for want of opportunities of development and exercise: an education in gentleness, in self-control, in truthfulness; an antidote to the meanness and coarseness of their hard daily life. It warms them out of sullenness and shyness, and awakens those feelings of love and respect for something higher and more perfect than themselves, which is the first step to salvation for every human soul. Children learn who their "betters" are, in a way in which no catechism could teach them; and they learn it by the breaking down of the artificial barrier which seemed to separate their "betters" from themselves, so that the "reverence" of which they have been told becomes a natural and

spontaneous offering, and not an exacted tribute. Such dim perceptions of womanly delicacy and purity as the working man's daughter carries out with her into the world, she will have caught from this silent teaching which she has received at school. Whatever little refinements of taste may gild the coarser clay of her nature in days to come—whatever higher conceptions of her duties as a wife and mother may help to make her household somewhat different from what an English labourer's household too commonly is—she will have learnt, however unconsciously, under the same instructors. Few and faint such conceptions may often be, at the best; but it is hardly wise in the advocates of progress to take any step to extinguish them.

It is the quality of such teaching also that, like mercy,

"It bleaseth him that gives, and him that takes."

It has been a blessing to these voluntary educators as well as to their poorer neighbours. It has brought into communication, naturally and easily, those whose lines of life would otherwise have lain wide apart. The spheres of rich and poor have touched each other at the single point where a sympathetic impact was possible—the children. There may be suspicion and jealousy of the interference of a superior on many points; but it is an unusually churlish nature which is not won to something like a return of cordiality towards those who take a kindly interest in the little ones.

Such teaching as this is not religion: it is almost secular enough for the programme of the League. And cannot this be taught, then, it may be asked, in strictly secular schools? Is not all this moral training, direct and indirect, exactly what we want to have, and are willing that the State should pay for, so that it be kept separate from creeds and formularies? And

cannot the children get it just the same, under the system which we advocate? No—not until all the best women in England turn secularists; and that no Act of Parliament, no National League, no partisan agitation, will ever accomplish. Here and there may be found a benevolent enthusiast who is better than her creed; but once write over a school-door, "Here religion does not enter," and Christian benevolence (and there is very little true benevolence or self-denial in this country which is not Christian) will turn aside as from unholy ground, and go its sorrowful way, and gather here and there, in their Master's name, as it may, at such times and in such places as God's providence may permit, the children whom a Christian Legislature forbids to be so taught within any walls subject to its jurisdiction.

But the religious element which is to be banished from our day-schools is to have ample scope, we are told, in the Sunday-school. All things have their time and place—reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, history, "useful knowledge"—for the six days, religion for the seventh—for such as choose. Of the exceeding value of Sunday-schools there can be no doubt. If the present Bishop of Winchester has not long since repented his hasty and injudicious condemnation of them, his Nemesis has found him out now. Those who have talked about the confinement and restriction inflicted by their means upon poor children, thus making the Sunday a misery to them instead of a rest and refreshment, were simply talking of what they did not understand. If the teachers be kind and intelligent—especially if they be drawn from the higher ranks—the Sunday is perhaps the happiest day, as it ought to be, in the little scholar's life. If it were not so, why should they come so regularly and cheerfully? Why should big boys, glorying in their

independence and emancipation from the daily schoolmaster, yet come, Sunday after Sunday, to the class of the voluntary teacher, and, except for an addiction to surreptitious apples and peppermint, become of their own free will his docile and obedient pupils? Undoubtedly, there is a beautiful theory which is being continually violated in this case, as in so many others. That the working-man and his wife should go to church themselves, each with an octavo prayer-book under their arm, followed by their small family, two and two (have we not seen it set forth in pictures?); that they should, in the intervals between the services, sit each on one side of the fire, with a quarto family Bible, and an array of smaller editions, on the table, and hear the little ones read,—it is this sacred family life which the parson and the Sunday-school teacher are accused of breaking up, and forcing or beguiling their victims into the ungenial prison-house, whence they are marched off like convicts to church. The system, it has been said, destroys the Sabbath rest of a Christian home. We have too much respect and sympathy for the real difficulties which stand in the way of the working man to draw, as it might truthfully be drawn, the sorrowful contrast between the ideal picture and the true. Whatever early religious training most children of the working class obtain at all, is obtained first in the day-school, and supplemented and carried out to a more advanced age in the Sunday-school. They have little enough, in most cases, in their homes; not always through defect of honest will on the parents' part—quite as often from honest inability. Teaching comes naturally to very few uneducated minds. They may be very wrong in looking to the schoolmaster and the parson, or their denominational minister, to do this work, which undeniably should be their own; but they notoriously do look

to them in this matter. They have not the quiet roomy home, the abundant leisure from family cares, the ready books and helps at hand, which make it easy for us to teach and train our little ones. To wash and dress, and send to school in decent and comely Sunday trim, the four or five little ones who are old enough, is the practical religion of many such a mother. Are we all sure that it is a religion of less love, of less patient self-denial, of less reality—a service less “according to that we have”—than our own much reading and many prayers?

But after allowing all possible merit to the Sunday-school as a means of religious instruction, it is idle to expect that this means alone will be sufficient. It is impossible to crowd into a couple of hours’ teaching, once a-week, the bare historical facts of the New Testament, where the teacher has uneducated minds to deal with. In a household where the Bible is daily read *at home*, the public teaching of the Sunday may be held sufficient; but for the class with which educational legislation has to deal, unless the child gathers in the day-school some substratum, as it were, of religious knowledge, most of the Sunday teaching is lost. Even with this weekly aid, the ignorance on the part of a majority of those who come to the Sunday-school would astonish most inquirers who were not familiar with it from long personal experience. Besides, the class for whom education is most loudly demanded are exactly those for whom Sunday-schools will open their doors in vain. Dissolute and careless parents will not send their children to such places, and children so unfortunately neglected will not care to go. It is demanded that the day-schools maintained by rate shall be wholly without religious teaching. This is refusing even the chance of any

such training to those who need it most. It is declaring—to quote the words of a Liberal journal which has taken a nobly independent line on this question—“that the vagrant and the destitute shall be brought up to believe in this world and no other, and not even learn in early youth that there is a world of the first moment within each child’s breast, on the insight into which the colour of his whole life must depend.”*

Perhaps the most futile of all propositions, by way of compromise, which have been suggested on this question, is, that the Bible shall be allowed to be read in all schools, but “without note or comment;” read, that is, without being taught. If this is intended merely as a sop to the ignorance and bigotry of Christians, thrown out by their wiser and more enlightened secularist opponents, it is intelligible enough; otherwise, it is hardly possible to conceive such a proposal seriously advocated by any man who knows what the education of children of the labouring classes means,—nay, by any man who has himself any intelligent knowledge of the Bible. Yet the proposal is made—and made, no doubt, in all good faith—by some who ought to know what they are talking about. Lord Russell has lent it his advocacy—the last results of his meditations in retirement, being somewhat in the way of a palinode, as he confesses, on some of his former utterances—and has been so liberal as to throw supplementary “hymn” into the bargain; which hymn, it has been very fairly observed, may be easily made at least as sectarian as any exposition, and would also, it may be added, take much deeper hold of the memory of a child. But Lord Russell’s performances as a letter-writer have been generally as damaging to his friends as to his opponents, and the League

* ‘Spectator,’ March 12.

would perhaps have preferred that he had not volunteered his last two commendatory epistles in their favour. But the words of another letter have a ring of eloquent plausibility, which may seem to justify the prominent type with which the 'Times' has honoured it.

"It is a painful revelation of the true nature of the sectarian spirit to learn that men should openly declare that the divine text of the Bible, of which they are not the authors, is nothing, and that the human commentary, which is all their own, is everything; that they should care so little for what the Scriptures say, and so much for what each man may think fit to make them mean."*

It may be quite true that to those who can understand what "the Scriptures say," they tell their own story, and are their own best interpreters. But what do they say to the child who reads them with difficulty, and as a mechanical task? It is not a question of this or that doctrine to be drawn from them. Do the words themselves say anything practically intelligible? For all the understanding that an average child in an elementary school would have of them, he might as well read them, if he could but make out the letters, in the original Hebrew or Greek. He would thus be much more sure of having the actual words of the "divine text," without even the alloy of a human translation; and the instruction which they would convey to his mind would be very much the same in both cases. For the perverse misinterpretation which even some of the simplest passages go through in the mind of such children, is often more objectionable than a stolid unconsciousness of any meaning at all. We will not be tempted into the quotation here of the strange interpretations which even elder scholars, guided

solely by the light of their natural reason or unreason, will give of what seem to us the simplest forms of expression in the Bible. Its antique phraseology is utterly different from the language of their daily life; even its "uncommon beauty and marvellous English," to which Mr Forster referred so happily in his opening speech, present special difficulties of their own to minds trained in the narrowest groove of thought and the most limited vocabulary. The continual reference to the manners and customs of a period and a climate so very different from this modern England, the parabolic and symbolic language which are of the very essence of the sacred text, require a continual and careful commentary from the teacher to make them intelligible to this class of minds. If such earnest champions of the undiluted Word as were Luther and Melancthon declared that "Scripture could never be understood theologically, until it was first understood grammatically," surely the same truth applies to the reading of the Scripture in our elementary schools, if the reading is to deserve in any degree the name of a "religious" exercise. A conscientious teacher of such children will find quite enough to do in making the Bible lesson fairly intelligible in its literal meaning to his class, without attempting to found upon it any deductive teaching, except some lesson of the simplest and most childlike character.

Nothing can, in fact, be more true than the remark made by a practical schoolmaster at the late conference held at the Westminster Hotel, that the religious difficulty is, after all, neither a teachers' difficulty, nor a parents' difficulty, but a "platform difficulty." It would never have been heard of, or at least

* Mr Vernon Harcourt, Letter to the 'Times,' April 12.

might have been easily disposed of by such concessions as reasonable men of all denominations would have been ready to make, had it not been found a convenient engine for that form of dissent which is rather political than religious, as presenting a convenient opportunity for a side attack on the Church of England as an Establishment. It has been the fashion to praise very highly the speech which Mr Winterbotham made in support of Mr Dixon's amendment. It was a speech of considerable ability, no doubt; but the *animus* which it openly displayed was hardly of a dignified character. The watchful jealousy on the part of Dissenters, of which he spoke, is no doubt a natural feeling, and finds its excuse, to a considerable extent, in that supercilious tone adopted by some Churchmen which must be confessed and lamented, and to which the speaker alluded. But mere jealousy is not a principle which commands much respect, or has much claim to be considered in an act of legislation which is of immense national importance. No attempt was made to show that the provisions of the Bill were unfair towards any denomination; and the fact that a majority of the schools which would be founded under such provisions would probably be Church schools, was put forth as a sufficient argument against such even-handed justice. Had the probable results been the other way, we should have had the old argument of the infallibility of the *vox populi*.

The prejudice against what is considered the "denominational" teaching in Church schools is no doubt often founded upon an honest ignorance of what that teaching is. People abuse the Church Catechism, like Mr Auberon Herbert at Nottingham, without any distinct recollection of what that dangerous manual contains. A somewhat amusing instance of this may be

found in the report of Mr Allen to the Society of Arts. He quotes with approbation a passage from a report by one of her Majesty's Inspectors as an instance of what he (Mr Allen) considers "the results of good teaching of the sort called in Holland neutral religious teaching,—that is, of undenominational teaching on the basis of a common Christianity." Here is the passage—

" 'I cannot,' says the rev. gentleman, 'refrain from giving an instance of practical interpretation by a boy of eleven years, living on the banks of the Thames, which might be profitably adopted by many persons of riper years and more exalted station.' 'Tell me of any state of life to which it may please God to call you?' 'A waterman.' 'Well, how would you do your duty in that state?' 'Take no more passengers than the licence says.' 'Well, anything besides?' 'Behave civil to the passengers.' 'Anything else?' 'Land 'em dry on the other side.' 'Anything else?' 'Keep some of the money for my father and mother.' 'Anything more?' 'Try to lead a good life.' Mr Brookfield continues: 'I have heard in my time some lengthy and less complete commentaries on your duty towards your neighbour than undertaking no more than your boat will carry, claiming no more than your regular fare, and landing them dry on the other side.' "

Her Majesty's Inspector was quite right, though one cannot help wondering whether he or the boy had ever read Corporal Trim's famous exposition of the fifth commandment:—

" 'Prithee, Trim,' quoth my father, turning round to him, 'what dost thou mean by,' '*honouring my father and mother*!'

" 'Allowing them, an' please your Honour, three halfpence a-day out of my pay, when they grow old.' . . . 'And didst thou do that, Trim?' said Yorick. . . . 'He did indeed,' replied my uncle Toby. . . . 'Then, Trim,' said Yorick, springing out of his chair, and taking the Corporal by the hand, 'thou art the best commentator upon that part of the Decalogue;—and I honour thee more for it, Corporal Trim, than

if thou hadst had a hand in the Talmud itself.' ”

But, at all events, the Inspector and the Corporal both knew, what the “Arts” Commissioner apparently did not, that this “neutral” and undenominational teaching—this common Christianity—about “doing one’s duty in that state of life to which it shall please God to call us,” was nothing more or less than the poor old Church Catechism, and the illustration very much what any sensible parson, catechising in his parish school, would try to draw out of the working lads in his first class.

Let this also be remembered by those who would judge the matter fairly. The parochial clergyman is, in nine cases out of ten, a gentleman. Even those who have entertained no love for the Church of England as a religious institution, have been ready to admit this fact, and to recognise the immense advantage to the country of such men’s presence and active interest in their several parishes on that ground only. If he is a man who takes any active interest in the parish school, the chances are even yet more largely in favour of his having not only the instincts of a gentleman, but a liberal and generous appreciation of the rights of others as well as of his own. It is no injustice to the average of Nonconformist ministers to say that his notion of his religious duty will, in one point at least, be not exactly what they would suppose, nor exactly what their own might be. Granted that he looks upon all the children in the school—nay, all the children in his parish—as his pupils of right. He does so. But he recognises also another fact, that by the will of their parents, some of these children are, through no fault of his, virtually withdrawn from his spiritual superintendence. This he laments; but in this world he knows there is often a conflict of duties. And in an old and much-abused formulary—which as

yet, however, he is permitted to teach, at least where the parent makes no objection—he finds a short and peremptory, but very intelligible, bit of “dogmatic teaching,” which he has, with more or less success, been trying to impress upon these little people, Dissenters and orthodox alike—“Honour thy father and thy mother.” It would seem to him a very incongruous commentary upon this precept to teach any child specially that his father and mother’s religious views were wrong; that they were training him up in the way in which he should *not* go; that in the one most important point of all, their wishes, their views, their opinions were not deserving of his “Honour.” Putting all higher considerations for the moment apart, his natural sense of delicacy, of honour, of the duty which one man owes to another, would seal his lips against any expression which could encourage a child to dishonour his parent. Even supposing that parent, instead of merely differing from the teacher himself upon certain articles of belief or of Church discipline, were a thief or a drunkard, surely the teacher would think himself bound to ignore the miserable truth as far as possible in his communications with the child, and to leave him, so long as might be, in happy ignorance that the parent was in any way undeserving of his reverence and love. For he would feel that to loosen the natural bond, which is the first law which a child can comprehend, would be but a sorry way of laying the foundation of the higher obligations which he is being gradually taught to recognise. Obedience and duty, even to a bad parent, will be a far safer training than the precocious casuistry which is always questioning how far obedience is lawful.

No sensible teacher, indeed, would in any case choose to become “a subtle disputant on creeds” with scholars of ten or twelve years old.

It must be a miserable sectarianism which would pride itself upon such proselytes. It seems scarcely possible that sensible Nonconformists can really entertain a serious dread of such a result in schools which are under the management of Churchmen. Controversial teaching, with such disciples, is simply impossible. If they have really any dread of the influence which the training in a Church school may have upon the children in after life, it must be that the simple and patient inculcation, from week to week, of the plainest truths and duties of the Gospel, the quiet and reverent tone with which they will hear such subjects treated, the constant reference of moral duties to Christian principle—which are, or ought to be, the “denominational” doctrines of a church elementary school—will not predispose the recipients of such early teaching to become, in after life, aggressive enemies of a church establishment. Such training may not make them Churchmen : if their other associations lie outside the pale of the national Church, it very seldom will ; but it will save them at least from such misapprehensions and misrepresentations of its principles and its doctrine as we so often hear. If this result seems to the opponents of Mr Forster’s Bill a thing to be dreaded and resisted at the risk of crippling national education altogether, then

there is no more to say. If they hold that all Christianity consists in antagonism to the Church of England, then they will be right in resisting this Bill by every means in their power. It is alike too conservative and too liberal, too truly national, for such men to approve.

It has been the wont of Nonconformists hitherto to complain that while they were always willing to recognise in the Church of England fellow-workers who were carrying out the same great purpose by different means, the Church, on the other hand, persistently ignored this theory of parallel action. Nonconformist ministers have been wont to talk much about “holding out the right hand of fellowship to their brethren of the Establishment,” and to call on them to unite as against a common enemy. It will be remembered henceforth, whatever termination this miserable agitation may have, that when the question arose of taking common ground with the Church against a tide of practical atheism,—when the Christian education of the nation was hanging in the balance,—a majority of them (not all) were willing to throw their weight into the scale in favour of excluding from the daily life of the children of the poor all Christian teaching whatever, rather than see that instruction given by their “brethren” of the Church.

MUTUAL LIFE ASSURANCE.

SCOTTISH PROVIDENT INSTITUTION, No. 6 St Andrew Square, Edinburgh.

THE 32^d ANNUAL MEETING was held on 30th MARCH.

The Business showed the usual steady increase, the new Assurances being 1380 for £281,036. The claims by death were 293,663, 5s., being less by £40,000 than are provided for in the Office estimates. The Rate of Interest has been a half per cent above the estimate. The Accumulated Fund, increased in the year by £137,333, 11s., now stands at £1,636,249, 5s. The chief items of the Business reported will be seen in the last line of the annexed Table.

P. G. TAIT, Esq., Professor of Natural Philosophy in the University, in submitting the Directors' Report, called special attention to the general principles on which Life Offices are founded and conducted, pointing out the causes of recent failures. He then dealt with the question of sufficient or reasonable Premiums, and noticed the various Estimates of Mortality and Interest, including those used in the Office Valuations, mentioning the fact that these Valuations had been tested, with the most satisfactory result, by calculations based on the Carlisle Table, and also on the newly published Table of Mortality deduced from the experience of the Scottish Offices, combined with a low rate of Interest. He concluded by discussing points connected with the Bill now before Parliament for ensuring publicity of Accounts.

The CHAIRMAN briefly reviewed the progress of the Institution, and noticed the thorough system of Audit now acted on, and moved the approval of the Report.

This was seconded by A. KEITH JOHNSTON, LL.D., and unanimously adopted.

PROGRESS OF THE INSTITUTION IN THE LAST EIGHT YEARS.

In Year.	New Policies Issued.	Amount Assured.	Claims in Year.	Amount Paid at end of Each Year.
1882	792	4372,469	456,778	4561,003
1883	880	455,793	59,656	938,902
1884	962	493,456	57,844	1,022,467
1885	1030	501,900	53,123	1,131,471
1886	1056	511,569	85,815	1,245,372
1887	1378*	621,574*	80,433	1,362,305
1888	1092	541,127	80,284	1,449,016
1889	1180	581,036	93,663	1,608,249

* These include a number of Short-Term Assurances to secure travelling Expenses.

IN THIS SOCIETY alone Members can obtain Assurances, with right to share in WHOLE PROFITS at MODERATE PREMIUMS. In other Offices they may secure at rates as low, but involving the sacrifice of all Share in Profits; or they may obtain right to Profits, but only by payment of Excessive Rates.

Examples of Annual Premium for £100 at Death, with Profits.

Age.	25	30	35	40	45	50
PAYABLE DURING LIFE,	£1 18 0	£2 1 6	£2 6 10	£2 14 9	£3 5 9	£4 1 7
LIMITED TO 21 PAYMENTS,	£2 12 6	£2 15 4	£3 9 2	£3 7 5	£3 17 6	£4 12 1

The Rates invited to 7, 14, &c., payments, or for other Ages, may be sent on application.

* A person aged 30 may secure £1000 at death, by a yearly payment during life, of 29s. 15s. This Premium, if paid to any other of the Mutual Offices, would secure a Policy for £300 only, instead of £1000. Or, if unwilling to burden himself with payments during his whole life, he may secure the same sum of £1000 by twenty-yearly payments of £27, 15s. 4d. At age 40 the Premium, *ceasing at age 60, is*, for £1000, 23s. 14s. 3d., being about the same as most Offices require during the whole term of life.

Full Copies of the Annual Report, with Forms of Proposal, and every information, may be had on application.

EDINBURGH, May 1879.

JAMES WATSON, Manager.

BLACKWOOD'S

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Vol. CVII.

CONTENTS.

EARL'S DENE.—PART VIII,	667
MERCER'S JOURNAL OF WATERLOO,	694
OUR IRONCLAD SHIPS,	706
JOHN.—PART VIII.,	725
TRADE-UNIONS.—CONCLUSION,	744
THE ADMIRALTY,	763
THE PROBLEM SOLVED,	772
LOTHAIR,	773
INDEX,	794

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EARL'S DENE.—PART VIII.

CHAPTER IX.

"I THOUGHT you were come to have a chat," said Monsieur Prosper, as Félix dropped into his room on his way to Portman Square. "But what is it?" he asked, suddenly. "You look like Solomon in all his glory. Mind, I say, *look* like it—for you are not Solomon in any other sense, my poor Félix. He was wise, and—well, never mind for the present. But what is it? Can you stay? I have a new duet for piano and violin I want to show you. It's magnificently difficult."

"Oh, I only just looked in for a minute on my way. I have an engagement."

"Really? I thought I always knew everybody's engagements."

"It is at your friend Miss Raymond's."

"The devil!"

Félix could not help colouring.

"And why not?" he asked.

"Oh, it's all right, of course. They'll pay you, all safe enough."

"Are you not going?"

"I? No. I should have to hear some of my pupils, and I get

enough of them in the day without wasting my evenings upon them as well. Besides, I must be at the theatre. Do you know who's to be there?"

"Oh, Catalani's to be the star, I believe; and the rest amateurs, I should fancy."

"Aha! so my new pupil is not to be there, then?"

"By the way," asked Félix, making a vain effort to change the conversation, "what do you think of your new pupil?"

"My dear Félix, when I want my throat cut I will perform the operation myself."

"Naturally. But does any one want to cut your throat, then?"

"Oh yes; half the musical profession. But you certainly would, if I said that my new pupil—by whom I suppose you mean Mademoiselle Lefort—is not Catalani and Mara combined. And so I prefer to hold my tongue."

"You don't speak very warmly about her."

"There—did I not say that you would cut my throat? No—I

will leave you to judge for yourself. I don't suppose you don't know that you will hear her in something less than an hour."

"You know how important it is that she should do well now. Miss Raymond was telling me—I suppose you have heard about her and her cousin—how she also wants to do something——"

"A cousin too, is there? Is there no end to these women?"

"Have you not heard the story?"

"I hear so many stories—I dare say I have; but I never listen to anything but *do, re, mi*. What is it?"

"Of the death of Angélique's—Mademoiselle Lefort's uncle——"

"Oh, I remember—at an election. Yes—this is certainly a free country. My faith! I should think so. I wonder I got alive through the streets myself. But the cousin?"

"It is a sad story indeed. He left a daughter, and two young children besides, who are dependent on her."

"*Eh bien!* The story is not very original."

"And how are they to live?"

"*Sacré cochon!* Am I a prophet or a millionaire, that you ask me?"

"Miss Raymond, I can guess from what she said, must have been very good to them; and there is a Monsieur Lester—I think that is the name——"

"Ah, a Monsieur! Is she pretty, this cousin? And yet you ask me how she is to live?"

"I wish you would not joke about it, Prosper."

"Well, I will not, then."

"But Miss Raymond cannot support them always. And Angélique is not brought out yet——"

"Ah! *hinc illæ lacrymæ*, as Monsieur Dick Barton would say. A strange dog, that Dick Barton! And so they are in London. *Ma foi!* It is the worst place to find anything to do."

"But you know everybody—you might know some one——"

"Oh, I know plenty of people—plenty; and they all want something to do themselves. I want something to do. But this cousin—is she in the profession, then?"

"I believe not. But Miss Raymond said that she might teach children—and you might know——"

"Oh yes, I know. She is the sort of person, you mean, who will just give me the trouble of unteaching everything when I come after; I know the sort of people who 'might teach children,' as you say. Well, well; no matter for one more or less. They are all the same, these girls, who think they can teach off-hand without having learned."

"But you might keep her in mind?"

"I might, if I knew her name—or I might not, which is more likely."

"Marie Lefort. And"—insinuatingly—"when shall I see the duet?"

"Can't you now? I want to have it played at Lady Weston's on Thursday. Would you play in it if I can get Herr Schwärmer to take the piano? Just look at it."

"Oh, I'll try my best with pleasure; and you will not quite forget to do anything if it comes in your way? But I'm afraid I must be off now."

"Well, if you must—give my love to Mademoiselle Angélique. *Pauvre garçon!*" he added to himself, as Félix closed the door behind him; "just like him—out of work himself, and then thinking only how he can get work for somebody else. And his hanging after that girl, of all girls. It's plain enough to see what *she* is. I wish people wouldn't call and put me out. Couldn't anything new be done, I wonder? People are getting tired of all the old things. If I could only get hold of a new star! I shan't make my fortune with this Mademoiselle Angélique,

I'm afraid. She's pretty,—very pretty, no doubt, much too pretty to stick to the boards. She'll be a flash in the pan, even if she isn't a *fiasco*. I wonder why in the devil's name I ever took her up! If the skies would but drop me a new star!"

And so he sank into a fit of calculation—not of castle-building, but of real calculation, with pencil and paper, till it was time for him to go to the theatre. Meanwhile Félix carried his violin-case, which had somehow been replenished since the fire—no doubt Monsieur Prosper could have told how—to the house in Portman Square, of which the windows were now brilliantly lighted. It was not the true season, but the new Parliament was sitting, and the town was sufficiently full.

Miss Raymond, owing perhaps to the fact of her having spent so many years of the most impressible part of her life abroad, was something of the conventional musical fanatic; that is to say, she knew a little music, believed herself to be a critic, and liked to play the part of an art-patroness in a small way: and as her will was law to the relations who so greatly benefited by her living with them, she was able to indulge this as much as she pleased, as well as her more real and natural tastes.

This was intended to be to some extent a concert of distinction; and Miss Raymond was good-naturedly vain of an entertainment at which she was going to play the part of art-patroness indeed by introducing to the world as her own special *protégée* and discovery, one about whom the whole town was at once to run wild. She was not the hostess nominally, but still she was, as it were, the presiding genius of the evening; and she had no reason to complain of having gathered together an audience that was indisposed to be indulgent to her whim. The heiress of New Court was somebody, even in London. Amongst the rest Warden, who was now

keeping his first term at the Middle Temple, was present, and so, of course, was Angélique, dressed in deep mourning, which, though it did not suit her style, had the effect of making her look interesting. Marie could not come to hear her cousin's first triumph; it was too soon after her sorrow.

The concert itself was very much like other concerts where the performers are for the most part members of an undistinguished clique, and the audience is half ignorant and altogether friendly—that is to say, it was artistically indifferent, but socially pleasant; and Angélique was, as a matter of course, treated as though she had been a real seraph. It would have been just the same had her voice been that of a frog instead of a woman, and had she been incapable of singing a single note in tune. Miss Raymond was in ecstasies; the nominal *prima donna* condescended to be, or to affect to be, a little out of temper; and everybody was satisfied, and nobody could have told why.

Except Félix. He had gone to the party, in his ignorance, as so many, under far less adverse circumstances, have gone before him, expecting all manner of gratification from meeting once more her to whom he had a right to look for what he expected; he had drawn a prophetic picture, in which her eyes sparkled when she saw him, in which he was constantly by her side talking of old times and of things outside and above the crowd, and in which her triumph was altogether lost in his own. But, like the hieroglyphics of prophetic almanacs, his picture prognosticated anything but what came to pass. How could she, the heroine of the evening, afford to throw more than just one look of recognition to a poor fiddler whose allotted position was behind a cruel red cord, beyond which he dared not trespass? It was in times, be it remembered, when in some far greater, and

therefore, it might be presumed, more generous houses than this, the queens of song themselves were separated visibly from the guests, as though their presence was something dangerous. He found that he had to content himself with a distant prospect of her, like that of the sun from the earth; and the prospect was by no means delightful. He had to see others whisper in her ear, to see others sit by her side, to see others lead her to the place where she stood to sing—and, worst of all, to see others make her smile; for she by no means seemed to receive the attentions that were paid her as though her thoughts were as far away from her as he was. He was absurd enough to wonder that absence should have wrought so great a change in her; and, with the irritation of his profession and the passion for equality of his country, felt the unlucky rope in front of him grow and extend into a symbol of all manner of social wrongs, besides his own—as though its absence would have made the slightest difference! People have often followed the red flag itself on grounds more absurd than those afforded by a red cord.

"I am an artist," he thought to himself a hundred times over, "and above all these people. Catalani herself is nothing more, after all. It is only in *bourgeois* England, then, that we should be treated so—that we should be treated like infected sheep. I will go at once." But he did not go, of course; for jealousy has its own fascination, and revels in its own wretchedness.

But still jealousy without a special object is to be borne, and he had yet to feel its true sting.

For now it was that a young gentleman who had arrived late, having paid his respects to the ostensible hostess, made his way to where Miss Raymond was sitting and listening to Angélique, who was singing.

The lady of New Court smiled

brightly and gave him her hand, but laid her finger on her lips. He sat down beside her in silence, and, during a pause in the song, Félix could have sworn that he saw a glance of recognition pass between the singer and the new-comer, who was far too good-looking to please him. When it was over,—

"Now you may speak to me," said Miss Raymond. "What do you think of her? Is she not charming?"

The other, recalled to earth, woke up suddenly to perform his share of the applause that followed. But he did not criticise.

"You are well again, then, as I see you here?" asked Miss Raymond. "I wish I could say you look so, though. I am so glad to see you again."

"Not so glad as I am to be seen, I can assure you. I got sick of being ill; or else the doctors would have had me down at Earl's Dene this very moment."

"Are you wise, then——"

"To be here? Of course I am. When one is strong enough to rebel against two doctors it is high time to use one's strength. So I travelled up yesterday, and heard from Warden that you were at home this evening." He did not, however, say what else he had heard from Warden—what, in fact, had really brought him there. It would not have been polite to Miss Raymond. "But you do not scold me for coming to you uninvited?"

"As if I were not only too glad you were able! Of course we should have asked you if we had known. So now you are an M.P. ! But how you frightened us all!"

"Yes, I am actually an M.P., thanks to Warden, who ought to be in my place, by rights. Ah, he is here, I see," he said, nodding across the room. "But I must compliment the new *prima donna*."

And he went at once to the side of Angélique, who received him with a pressure of the hand just not too long to be noticed by any

one, and a look from her eyes that seemed to those of Félix to be a great deal too long.

Nor was this the worst by any means. Angélique had far too much tact to let it be noticed by the room generally, but her old lover could plainly see that this unknown acquaintance of hers was in reality filling the place to which he had looked forward in vain. He could see that confidential glances and communications were passing between them; and whereas he had been angry with her hitherto for the smiles that she had been scattering around her, he was angry with her now for not scattering them any longer.

It was not long before he was fairly worked into that state of fever in which impulsive men lose all mastery over themselves, and invariably do the most stupid things possible. He made up his mind that, as soon as the concert was over, he must and would speak to her—he, who was about as likely to prove her master as he was to fly over the moon, or, for that matter, rather less.

Angélique was sleeping in the house for a night or two, so that the stairs and the hall were not likely to afford him any opportunities. So he lingered long over putting up his instrument, waited till the giving of "good-nights" was in full progress, and then entered the company part of the drawing-room, full of indignation and dignity. He watched the manner in which she parted with Lester, waited till the latter had left the room with Warden, and then presented himself.

"Angélique," he said, "I am come to wish you good-night."

Miss Raymond, with the mistress of the house, was standing close by.

"Ah," said Angélique, suddenly, and with an air of surprise, "Miss Raymond, here is Monsieur Félix—you remember—who gave us some lessons *chez* Madame Mercier."

Miss Raymond held out her hand. "Ah, Monsieur—I have to thank you for your assistance; I hope it will not be the last time. Why did you not come and speak to me before?"

But Félix, being angry, had not forgotten the red cord.

"I did not presume, Mademoiselle," he said, pointedly.

"Do I look so very dreadful, then? And what do you think of our new star—your own pupil, you know?"

"She has received more valuable applause to-night than mine could be, Mademoiselle." Then he added, turning to Angélique, "Could I speak to you a moment, before I go?"

"About my cousins? Oh, certainly," she answered, coldly, and then led the way to a more retired part of the now nearly empty room.

"Well?" she asked.

"And so we meet again at last, Angélique! I thought you were going away for ever." He wished to speak tenderly, but did not quite succeed, for the attempt was too self-conscious.

"Yes—as you say, we meet again."

"And when can I see you? For I have certainly not seen you to-night."

"Have you not? I was very visible."

"Yes—in the sense that every one has seen you."

"You speak as if you had something to complain of. What more of me could you have seen?"

"To complain of! I should think so. To have been obliged to sit in a corner, and to see you surrounded by all the blockheads in the room—"

Now it may be barely possible to prove, after a fashion, that Mark Warden, in so far as he, unconsciously putting in practice the theories of Monsieur Prosper, did not allow his career in life to be spoiled by a woman, had some jus-

tification for his conduct in its practical wisdom. But it is manifestly impossible to justify this last speech of Félix. At all events, Marie had seen nothing wrong in the one, while Angélique could not—or perhaps it would be more accurate to say, would not—pardon the other; and she must be taken to be the best judge. She drew herself up, and said,—

"I am sorry you have so poor an opinion of Miss Raymond's friends, Monsieur Félix."

"*Monsieur Félix*——?"

"I beg your pardon—Monsieur Crévillé. Thanks for correcting me. And what could you expect? That I should come and sit by you the whole evening?"

"No; but I did expect—that you would at least have known of my being in the room."

"Oh, I knew it well enough; but I do not choose that you should make me appear conspicuous."

"Angélique, you must have changed indeed."

"I do not know in what way; but if I have, I never heard that a woman might not change if she pleases."

"*'Bien fol qui s'y fie!'* Do you mean this for a quarrel, Angélique?"

"Why will you be so unreasonable? No—not unless you force it upon me. And pray do not speak quite so loud."

"*Mon Dieu!* I force a quarrel upon you!"

"So it seems. And now I think you had better say good-night.

The room is empty. Good-night, Monsieur Crévillé," she added in a louder tone, so that Miss Raymond might hear.

He was not in a condition to speak; so he bowed to Miss Raymond and left the room.

Angélique did not look after him, but watched the exit of her lover in the pier-glass, to which she had turned to see that her expression was sufficiently composed. "What folly!" she said to herself: "would he have me wait ten years for the pleasure of living in a garret at the end? What selfish creatures men are! If he would only but be reasonable!" Then she heaved the smallest of sighs, and went to bed as soon as Miss Raymond would allow her, where her triumph of the evening did not prevent her very soon falling asleep. She had done a very good evening's work in every way, and had fairly earned her repose.

For her, too, is any apology needed? Surely not. Where is the father or mother who would prefer that his or her daughter should keep troth with a penniless fiddler, when she was wooed by Mr Lester of Earl's Dene? Nor—unless we are very much mistaken—are there many sons or daughters who would, in this respect, practically differ from their fathers and mothers. It is by majorities that the world, it seems, is henceforth to be governed; and in the hands of the majority her case may be left very safely indeed.

CHAPTER X.

Marie, who was by no means too much troubled with visitors, was very much surprised one morning by being told that a rather oldish foreign gentleman wanted to speak to her. She was not in the most convenient order to receive any one, for she was giving the children

their dinner in the one little room that served them for parlour, drawing-room, dining-room, study, and nursery, and that had therefore the air of being all at once; not to speak of its looking a little like a dressmaker's work-room besides. But the aspect of the stranger

reassured her. He did not look like one who took notice of such things.

"Mademoiselle Marie Lefort?" he asked, rather bluntly.

She bowed nervously, for she was not used to speaking to strangers. The children neglected their plates and sat staring.

"You know my name, perhaps, Mademoiselle? Monsieur Prosper."

Her face brightened. "With whom my cousin Angélique is studying?"

"The same." He looked at her sharply in a way that she did not like, and that made her colour. "And I hear," continued her visitor, smiling at her confusion, "that you want to do something."

"I do indeed."

"Ah! and these little ones are the brother and sister of whom I have heard. And what's your name, my man?"

"Ernest—and this is Fleurette."

"Do you like chocolate, you and Fleurette?" and he produced a snuff-box half full of *bon-bons*.

"Catch—that's right. And what can you do, Mademoiselle? Ah, you paint a little, I see. Not much in my way, that. Do you play at all—sing?"

"Very little indeed, Monsieur."

"Ah, you are not wise, Mademoiselle. You should have said 'Yes, a great deal.' You must learn to play on your own trumpet a little. And if you really play only a very little, I am afraid you will teach only a very little too."

"It is my cousin who sings."

"'Who will sing, perhaps,' you should have said. Well, well; I daresay you will do no worse than half your profession."

Marie was looking very mortified and small.

"Would you mind letting me hear your voice, Mademoiselle?"

He saw her look of terror and smiled, but sat down at once before the open piano—a parting present from Miss Raymond to An-

gélisque. "Now, Mademoiselle;" and he struck a chord.

She had never opened her lips in song before anybody before, and having to do so before this distinguished musician fairly frightened her out of her wits. A sound, however, did come out; and, though it trembled, it was in tune.

"Now this, Mademoiselle;" and so he proceeded for a minute or two. Then he shook his head, and shrugged his shoulders contemptuously.

"Now play me something," he said.

She was trembling all over with nervousness; but she dared not disobey.

"Play anything you know best," he said.

She sat down, and struck a very feeble chord. He stopped her.

"Who has taught you?" he asked.

"I have never had any regular lessons. Sometimes I had a few at a school in the town where I lived—"

"Hm! well?"

"And Angélique plays so splendidly—"

"Never mind Angélique. Well, let me see if you can do anything at all. Never mind me," he said; "I'm not sure that I shall even listen to you."

He turned away, walked to the window, and began to amuse himself by humming a tune and looking into the street. She began to play, first absurdly and weakly; but she gradually gained confidence to such an extent that she forgot that she was not alone. Indeed music to her mind suggested the idea of solitude. When the piece was over, however, her misery returned a hundredfold. He was standing over her.

"You did not tell me the truth, Mademoiselle. Your fingering is ridiculous, and you make the most wonderful blunders besides. It is plain that your country teacher was an ass. But fortunately your

other teacher was anything but an ass."

"Angélique?"

"Bah! what has Angélique to do with it?"

"But I have had no other, I assure you."

"Oh yes, you have; one who takes very few pupils—very few indeed. Tell me—how did you use to spend your days?"

"Oh, I used to get up early, and if it was fine, and I had time, I used to go out and walk or sketch a little. Then I used to make the breakfast, and when my poor father went out to his lessons, I used to teach the children, and mend the clothes, and go out to buy what was wanted from the town. Then we had dinner; and then I did whatever I had not had time to do in the morning, or else I amused myself."

"Ah! and how did you amuse yourself?"

"Generally with the harpsichord. I was always alone in the afternoon, so it did not matter what noise I made. And then when my father came in I sat with him and finished mending the clothes till it was time to go to bed."

"My God, what a life!" said the energetic Monseigneur Prosper, who would have gone mad had he to pass an hour without the excitement in which he lived.

"I was very happy, Monsieur."

"But did you never feel any discontent? Did you never wish to spread your wings and fly?" This was a wonderfully poetic flight for him, and he emphasised it by imitating the process with his arms.

"Never, Monsieur. I was quite content, then. And as for my wings——" she smiled.

"Then you played to yourself almost daily?"

"Whenever I could. It was, indeed, my great pleasure. I do not know why, I am sure, for I play very badly, I know, and I never was taught more than what I told you; but somehow, whenever I

found myself alone, and with nothing better to do, I used to sit down and play without thinking about it. Very often I did not know what I was playing, or even whether I was playing at all."

"And what did you play?"

"Oh, anything that came in my way. Ah, Monsieur, you cannot think what I sometimes found in that old harpsichord of ours. I think I used to find in it everything in the world. I am afraid you must think me very foolish; but when other girls were reading novels, and talking the nonsense that we girls do talk among each other, you know, they never seemed to get so much as I did, in my own way. I used to play the same thing over and over again, and always seemed to get something new and fresh out of it. And sometimes I used to seem to understand everything, and sometimes to feel everything without understanding it, and sometimes to lose myself altogether, and sometimes——"

She stopped suddenly, and blushed at the nonsense she felt she was talking. She had never made so long a speech about herself in her life. But Monsieur Prosper, for a wonder, neither smiled, nor shrugged his shoulders, nor uttered a sarcasm. He only took a pinch of snuff, and said,—

"Could you play anything at sight, Mademoiselle?"

She wished the floor to open and swallow her.

"Ernest," said Monsieur Prosper, "just run down stairs and bring up a roll of music and my violin-case."

What new torture was she to undergo?

"This is a duet, Mademoiselle, that I have just been composing for violin and piano. Would you see what you can make of your part?"

The notes seemed to swim before her eyes; but she attacked them mechanically.

"Ah, slower than that, Mademoiselle . . . one, two, three, four,

one . . . oh, *forte*, Mademoiselle, for the sake of heaven! . . . that's it . . . one, two . . . faster . . . lighter . . . the time there—mark the time, *sacré nom de Dieu!* . . . so . . . oh, *horrible!* with grace, Mademoiselle, with grace! . . . oh, *miséricorde*, don't you know what *legato* means? . . . Not the pedals there, I implore you—are you mad? . . . *Sacré nom de Dieu!* . . . Now then . . . keep on so . . . oh, faster, faster . . . *prestissimo* . . . *mille diables* . . . *sacré nom* . . . *tonnerre d'enfer* . . . *cent cochons* . . . *sacr. r. r. r. ré!* . . .”

And so, for a whole half-hour, which seemed to her to be three hundred years at least, her ears were filled, until, what with the music itself, and the shouting and stamping and swearing in which her tyrant indulged when the *impresario* side of his nature was lost in that of the composer, and what with her own nervousness, she almost lost her senses.

But Monsieur Prosper showed her no mercy. No sooner had she struck the last loud chord than he, having worked himself into that state so well known to and feared by the friends of all poets and composers, in which a man cannot restrain his appetite for his own works when he has once tasted them, began to tune his violin.

It need not be said that she had to go through it all again with him, or that this time the scolding she received was something terrific.

“What do you think of that, Mademoiselle?” he said at last, as he returned the violin to its case.

She murmured something.

“Ah, I thought you would like it. That is quite à la *Moretti*; and yet not without originality. But don't flatter yourself that you have played it—that is quite another thing. But I must be off,” he added, looking at his watch, that was suspended to a gold chain as large as a cable, “I have to take it to Herr Schwärmer: I wonder

what he will make of it. *Bon jour*, Mademoiselle; *au revoir, mes enfants!*” and so he hurried off, leaving his victim prostrate with shame and despair.

“Miss Raymond has sent me the wrong cousin, it seems,” Monsieur Prosper said to himself as he left the house.

Poor Marie! Her head ached as though it would split: her brain was in a whirl; and it is no exaggeration to say, though the cause may seem slight enough to those who are not troubled with the nervousness of diffidence, that death would have been a relief to her. She had not strength enough left to close the hateful piano, which stood there an openly accusing witness of her shame. Had she but had the moral courage to refuse to disgrace herself! But it was too late now for regret; she could but cry with vexation.

But worse was yet to come. An hour or two afterwards, when she had become a little more composed, a note was brought to the door, directed in a strange hand to Mademoiselle Marie Lefort.

“5 — STREET, GOLDEN SQUARE.

“DEAR MADEMOISELLE,—A despairing fellow-creature implores you to grant him a favour. I am engaged to conduct a concert at Lady Weston's in Park Lane, and I am going to introduce at it for the first time my duet. M. Créville will take the violin; Herr Schwärmer the piano. *Takes*, did I say?—*was* to take! for the scoundrel has sprained his thumb—would it had been his neck!

“I therefore fly to you, Mademoiselle, in whose eyes I read a compassionate soul. Play it for me; and for eternity oblige

“LOUIS PROSPER.

“The concert is not till the 10th, so you will have plenty of time to study it. M. Créville shall bring it you to-morrow. And, for the love of heaven, mind about the pedals!

"I will take care you shall be satisfied about terms. *Au revoir, et bon début !*"

What! she asked to play Monsieur Prosper's own work in public at Monsieur Prosper's own request, and in the place of a celebrated professor! Surely there must be some mistake. But no—the note was only too clear, and only too plainly directed to her, and to no other. What in the world should she do?

Her first thought was to refuse at once. But then how could she dare offend this terrible Monsieur Pros-

per! At last, after much unhappy meditation, she made up her mind to wait till the morning. Perhaps by then her persecutor might have thought better of his extraordinary request. Would it might prove so! Meanwhile—for she was weary of this new exercise of thinking about herself—there was nothing to do but sit down and finish darning Fleurette's stockings. When this was finished, she went and looked at the children and then went to bed, where the music of the duet came back to her in the most terrible form of all. Queen Mab was not kind to her that night.

CHAPTER XI.

And so Marie entered upon a week of wretchedness; for Monsieur Prosper, now that he had once obtained a hold upon her, showed his promised gratitude in a most ungrateful fashion. He not only made her a slave to the duet, but treated her as his pupil without the least reference to what might be her own views and wishes, or even consulting her on the matter. Of course she applied to her husband for advice; but he, to whom Art was only a word which conveyed nothing more than the idea of a womanish amusement with which he had no sympathy, was unable to understand her embarrassment, especially when he learned that she was to be paid for her trouble.

Besides, his own affairs were absorbing his attention more and more. He was bringing the same industry and perseverance to bear upon his new study of the common law of England by which he had already made Greek and mathematics pay so well. The only difference in his style of study was that he found more pleasure in his work now than at Cambridge, and liked it better for its own sake. Blackstone was far more congenial to his practical nature than either Newton or Plato.

And so, on the very evening on which his wife was undergoing the nervous tortures of her *début*, he sat in his chambers in the Middle Temple, of which Inn he had become a member, thinking, not about her, but about himself. He was taking stock of his position, for he was practical even when the Middle Temple port had obliged him to put off his evening spell of work for an hour or two, and thought with a purpose when another would have dreamed; and on comparing what he was now with what he was even so short a time since as when he had been Hugh Lester's companion on the Redchester coach, he was by no means dissatisfied with the result. But still there was one hard fact of which it was impossible to get rid, which went far to spoil all his self-gratulation. He was by no means given to useless regret or to crying after spilt milk, and certainly not given to calling himself a fool; but now, as he balanced his account of profit and loss, he could not help almost thinking himself one.

"It is a hard case that a man should be punished for the mistakes that he commits in his boyhood. I shall now have to go through life with a burden from which I

shall never be free, when freedom from every kind of burden is absolutely necessary. Luckily she is not a woman who will interfere with me more than she can help, or perversely stand upon her rights. But that will not prevent my having all the disadvantages of having a wife combined with those of keeping a mistress, without having any of the advantages of either. I believe that if I were free and played my cards decently well, I might try for the New Court Stakes, and not be last in the betting. As it is, I suppose the prize will fall, as usual, to that ass Lester, who seems to have nothing to do but open his mouth, and the good things fall into it of themselves. I don't suppose that he was born richer than I; and clearly not with more brains. And yet, without any trouble or merit on his part, first he becomes heir to one of the finest estates in the country; then, again without trouble or merit of his own, without even caring about it, he drops into a seat in Parliament; and then, without having to look for her, there is an embodiment of all the virtues ready made to his hand. And I, at his age, have had to fight with fortune to wrest from her some three hundred a-year. I have borne the whole heat of a contested election for the sake of another, and I am chained for life—well, to another embodiment of all the virtues. Perhaps it would be better if she were not quite so immaculate. Yes, it is certainly a damned hard case! If I were only free, I do not see why the master of New Court should not be as successful against Earl's Dene as for it; and then—Come in!"

This exclamation was caused not by a tap at the door but by a sound as though the door was being attacked by a battering-ram. He turned round as he spoke, and, to his horror, beheld the form of his old acquaintance, Dick Barton.

"Ah," said the latter, "I guessed it was your name I saw on the

staircase — 'Mr M. Warden,' as bright as white paint could make it. And what are you up to now? Laying siege to the Woolsack? Well, if tricks will win the game, you'll do, I should say. One ought to keep sober in your company, it seems, eh?"

The sudden appearance of a big and powerful man upon whom one is conscious of having played a trick, is not altogether the most pleasant thing that can happen. Warden therefore gave a little laugh, and held out his hand.

"Ah, you mean our wager?" he said. "But I think it was you that got the best of that, wasn't it?"

"I see," the other answered, rather contemptuously, "you consider a contested election to be like charity. Well, perhaps it is—after a fashion. '*Sacro nec cedat honori.*' But it always struck me that our friend Prescott—who, by the way, was rather taking me up, and now, of course, has let me drop again like a hot potato—managed to wing the wrong bird. Well, well; let bygones be bygones. But how's this? Do you think dry? For my part, I can't suppose that 'think' and 'drink' were made to rhyme for nothing, any more than '*bibere*' and '*scribere*.' Any way, I'm certain that at this moment Dick Barton rhymes with anything to drink short of pump-water."

"I'm very sorry. My cellar's empty, I'm afraid."

"Oh, if that's all, a shilling or two will set that square. I'll fetch it. There's a place round the corner where there's capital brandy. Perhaps you know it? No? Then you shall in five minutes. I'm afraid I must produce the coin, though."

"I'm very sorry, Barton—but I'm afraid I have an engagement in half an hour."

"Oh, never mind. I'll go when she comes. So just lend me half-a-crown—or say ten shillings, if you can spare them, and I'll be back in no time."

"Oh, with pleasure," Warden answered, on the principle that the surest way to rid one's self of an acquaintance is to lend him that precise sum. Nor did the loan seem to have been wasted; for five minutes after five minutes passed, and Barton did not return. Warden sat down to read, and it was quite late when a knock at the door made his heart sink within him. It proved, however, not to be Dick Barton this time, but only his friend Hugh Lester.

"Why, Lester, this is a pleasant surprise! What brings you into this part of the world?"

"I am just come from Lady Weston's, old fellow, and thought I would just smoke a cigar with you on my way, as I felt bored."

"Well, I am delighted to see you, especially as I was getting rather bored myself with my own company. Will you take anything?"

"Have you such a thing as a soda-and-brandy?"

"I daresay I have. There—now you can help yourself." Warden could see that his visitor had something on his mind of which he had come to deliver himself; and besides, the Temple is not exactly on the way from Park Lane to Bruton Street. "What was going on this evening?" he asked.

"Oh, a sort of a concert—a great bore. By the way, Miss Lefort was playing—Marie, you know."

"And how did she get on?" asked Warden, with some little interest.

"Oh, she seemed all right. But I know nothing about that sort of thing."

"And did the fair Angélique perform?"

"No; but she was there with Miss Raymond."

"And did not Miss Raymond keep you from being bored?"

"Did I say I was bored? The fact is, Warden, I want your advice about something."

"Really? Well, I will give you the best I can."

"I know you will, old fellow."

"And what is it this time? Love or war?"

"Why, you see," Hugh was beginning, when a peal of thunder was heard at the door.

"The devil!" exclaimed Warden.

"What is it?"

"I'm afraid I must open. If I don't, he's just the man to break in. I suppose he saw the light in the window."

"But who is it?"

"Do you remember Barton of Tudor?"

"Of course I do, though I never met him."

"So much the better for you. I am extremely sorry, but I'm afraid I must let him in."

"I am sorry too, for I really wanted to see you."

And so Barton came in, bearing a bottle in triumph under his arm.

"Beg your pardon, Warden, for being so long. Damn it, I can't be drunk, and yet I see two brandy-bottles. Or have you been sending out and taking a mean advantage? All right—the more the merrier. We'll make a night of it."

"Really, Barton——"

"Oh, you be damned! Mayn't a man make himself at home in another man's rooms? Why, there are two Wardens!"

"Indeed there are not. This is Mr Lester, the member for Dene-thorp; and we have business to talk over. I told you I had an engagement."

"But where the devil am I to go, then?"

"Why not go home?"

"Warden, you're a milksop. Come—be hospitable for once. The night is young; and, what's more, I'm damned if I go home!—there."

"You see?" said Warden to Hugh in despair. "I know this fellow, and that it is impossible to get rid of him."

And there was in fact nothing to be done but for Hugh to make an appointment to see Warden at his chambers in the morning, to plead that he was bad company—as, in fact, he felt—and to go home, leaving Warden to the mercy of his old man of the sea.

He returned to the Temple at about ten o'clock the next morning.

"Why, how's this?" he said, on seeing the aspect of Warden's room; "you have been having a debauch with a vengeance."

"It is simply the most terrible animal I ever heard of," said Warden, smiling to cover his ill-humour; "here he is still, you see;" and he pointed to a sofa on which lay Barton asleep—not like a man who is working off the effects of much brandy, but like a child that has taken nothing stronger than milk-and-water in its life.

"What in the world are you going to do with him?"

"God knows! At Cambridge, I believe, he used to sleep four-and-twenty hours at a stretch when he slept at all, without waking. And where could one send him? He told me last night that he has given up living under a roof altogether."

"Oh, let the poor devil sleep it out. Shall we go out and talk somewhere else?"

"And leave no one here but this infernal beast? He would smash everything to pieces to look for liquor, or bring more in and get drunk again."

"That is true. Well, he's sound asleep, and one will know when he wakes, I suppose?"

"Trust him for letting us know that."

"Well, then—but I'm afraid I'm boring you."

"My dear fellow!"

"It's all about myself, you know—or rather it isn't. Would you mind my lighting a cigar?"

"A hundred, if you like."

"Thank you. Well, then, you see—I daresay you'll think me an

infernal ass—but as you know the people, and all that, you'll see—will you take a cigar yourself?"

"No, thank you."

"Well, then, the fact is—I am engaged to be married."

"Indeed! Then let me be the first to congratulate yourself and the lady. Am I wrong in guessing that it is to Miss Raymond?"

"No, it's not to Miss Raymond, and that's just the difficulty. You see my aunt seems to have set her heart on my marrying Miss Raymond."

Somehow Warden felt relieved, though of course it could be nothing to him.

"Am I to know who the lady is?" he asked.

"Mademoiselle Lefort."

Warden naturally thought of the election gossip about Lester and Marie. There must have been something in it, then, after all.

"The devil it is!" he exclaimed, but with a meaning very different from what Hugh supposed.

"And why not?" asked the latter, a little sharply.

"It is impossible you can be engaged to her."

"What do you mean? It is possible, because I am."

"Does Miss Lefort know?"

"How could I be engaged without?"

"But it is impossible. There must be some mistake."

"What in the world can you mean? How could I be mistaken about such a thing?"

"I mean that it cannot be."

"But why?"

"Because I happen to know; but I cannot tell you why—I can only tell you that you must most certainly be mistaken, though I grant it is strange that you should be. I know the Leforts well, and I assure you, as your friend and theirs, that it is quite impossible."

Of course it was quite possible, he thought, that Hugh might have declared his passion, and that Marie, in her innocence and stupidity and

shyness, and with the weight of her secret embarrassing her, might not have repulsed him in a manner that he had understood. How he wished that she had been free not to have repulsed him at all! He would have yielded her to Hugh, or to any one else, with the best will in the world. Hugh, knowing what he knew, could only stare in blank amazement. If he thought anything, it was that Warden, as his friend, considered it a friendly thing to save him from a *mésalliance*.

"Really, Warden, I must know what you mean. Indeed I have a right to an explanation—if you have any to give."

As he spoke another thought suggested itself to him. Warden was an older acquaintance of the family than he, and had known Angélique from childhood. Was it not possible that he might be a rival?

Warden saw the thought show itself in his friend's face; and he also saw that he was himself in a difficult position. Of course he supposed that he knew his wife well enough to assume that Hugh must necessarily be mistaken in thinking what he did appear to think; but still, unfortunately, it would never do to allow him to remain in his error. Marie, in self-defence, might have her secret wrung from her; and so he was ready enough to tell himself that it was his duty to spare her from persecution, and Hugh from running his head against so hard a wall.

"My dear fellow," he said, "you cannot marry Miss Lefort. I will tell you why, if you will promise to respect her secret; and you will then see that you must be mistaken in thinking that she could have promised to be your wife."

Hugh turned pale.

"It must not be known on any account. There are good reasons why, which I am not bound to tell you, seeing that they affect other persons; nor will you therefore ask me. But I am bound to save you

from an unprofitable pursuit; and I will therefore rely upon your honour not to let what I do say go farther than ourselves. Do you promise?"

Heaven knows what Hugh expected to hear; but he nerved himself as well as he could to hear his doom, whatever it might be. Of course he was equally prepared not to believe any story that might reflect upon Angélique.

"If it is no scandal—if it is nothing that my speaking may remove," he answered.

"Oh, it is no scandal," Warden answered, "but the contrary. It is that she is the wife of another man."

Hugh started forward. "That she is married? No—that I cannot believe."

"But when I tell you that I know it—that it can be proved?"

"Prove it, then."

"Did I not say that I could tell you nothing that affects others? It is enough for you that I am bound in honour to say no more."

The word "honour" always acted upon Hugh Lester like a spell. "But I am not bound to make no inquiries," he answered. "I am not going to give her up for a word, especially as if what you say is true—if you are not mistaken, I mean—I should have to believe that it is she who has deceived me. I will ask you nothing more; but I will go straight to her."

"What! and force her secret from her?"

"Yes, by God! It seems to me that I have some right in it also."

Somehow Warden had not calculated upon this. Perhaps he had relied too much upon the power of managing Hugh which he supposed himself to have acquired.

"Indeed you must do no such thing."

"What?"

Hugh spoke more in astonishment than in anger at being thus addressed by one to whom he was quite as much a patron as a friend.

"I mean that if you do——"

Hugh somehow felt that the advantage was with himself.

"Well—and if I do?"

"I think it very likely that she would deny it."

"And that I should have to decide between her solemn word and your word, which you refuse to prove? So that is your reason for saying that I must not? Very well then, I will not; for I should not dream of doubting her."

It did not suit Warden to quarrel with Hugh, otherwise the last speech gave him ample opportunity, and, had he been of warmer blood, would have had its effect, though, on Hugh's part, unintentionally. The latter had merely meant to say that he would take Angélique's word against that of all the world.

"Then," said Warden, not knowing exactly what to say, and speaking slowly to give himself time to consider, "if you do speak to Marie—to Miss——"

"To Marie?"

"To Miss Lefort, then. If——"

"But why did you say Marie?"

"Are we not speaking of her?"

"My dear fellow!" Hugh exclaimed, his face brightening, "do you mean to say you thought I meant Marie?"

Warden blushed scarlet, for about the first time in his life. "I did think so, certainly."

"Good God! how you frightened me! What! is Marie married?"

"You will surely respect her secret now?"

"Oh, I will be like the tomb. But what on earth made you think I meant Marie?"

"I suppose I was stupid. So you are engaged to Angélique?" he added, in a meditative tone.

"That is what I wanted to tell you," Hugh was beginning; but Warden scarcely heard him. His mind was flying off to other things.

"I see," he said at last. "And Miss Clare objects, I suppose—or would object if she knew."

"She objects very strongly indeed."

"And how can I advise you?"

"You see I don't want Angélique—Miss Lefort—to marry a beggar. And my aunt is so set against it, that——"

"Then my advice would be to do nothing in a hurry. Has Miss Clare—if I may ask—talked to you about this—told you anything about what she means to do?"

"She is so set on my marrying Alice Raymond—who I don't suppose would have me if I asked her—that if I marry as I must and ought, Miss Raymond will take my place altogether; and you know my aunt, that she does not speak without meaning it. I don't care about that, you know, only for Angélique; and because I like my aunt too much, and am too grateful to her to want to quarrel with her if I can help it. It's very odd that she can't see the thing in the same way as I do."

"Well, certainly, one would think that marriage is a matter in which a man should judge for himself. And if I know Miss Clare, she likes you too well for things not to come all right."

"Ah, you don't know her as I do."

"Of course not. But look here, Lester. You know that Miss Clare is for some reason or other inclined to put some confidence in me?"

"Naturally, after what you have done for us."

"Well then, if I, a disinterested third person, were to put the thing calmly before her—I suppose you have quite made up your own mind on the matter?"

"Quite."

"And I congratulate you on your choice. Miss Lefort's only fault is want of fortune; and what is that to you? Then if, as I say, I spoke quietly to Miss Clare——"

"Would you really?"

"Of course I would; though of course I cannot tell what the result would be. By the way, does Miss

Lefort herself know of Miss Clare's objection?"

"Why, no. There was no need, you see—"

"So much the better. There can be no reason why she should feel that there is any personal objection to her on the part of Miss Clare, if it can be avoided."

"You are the best fellow that ever lived, Warden."

"Oh, nonsense. I haven't done anything, and most likely never shall."

"And are you likely to be going down to Denethorp soon?" asked Hugh, with all the selfish impatience of a man in love.

"I daresay I may be, at Christmas."

"Not before?"

"How can I?"

"Well, I suppose not. Then you think I'd better not tell Angélique?"

"I should say certainly not. You really mean what you say, of course."

"Certainly. I intend to make her my wife, whatever may happen."

"Well, 'the course of true love,' you know. You may feel quite safe that in the end Miss Clare will be only too glad to change her mind."

"Well, you are a good fellow—and I can't thank you enough. By the way, why don't you go in for Alice Raymond yourself—a girl with no nonsense about her, and a good fortune besides?"

Warden smiled. "What! a country doctor's son go in for the lady of New Court?"

"Oh, why not?" It is wonderful how cheap men hold what they do not want.

"I hope you are not breaking her heart."

"If I am, you had better heal it."

"Oh, this is my wife," replied Warden, laying his hand upon a volume of 'Coke upon Littleton.' "And now, just consider it all right—and don't make yourself unhappy by thinking about difficulties."

"You really think it will come all smooth?"

"Of course I do—and of course it will. Holloa! What's that? By Jove! I had quite forgotten that guest of mine."

What he had heard was the creaking of the sofa, caused by the return to waking life of Dick Barton, who, after a yawn or two, succeeded in twisting himself into a position that was very tolerably upright.

"The devil!" he exclaimed, after another prodigious stretch. "I say, have you got anything to drink? I'm confoundedly thirsty."

"Soda-water?"

"Soda be blowed! *Kunos crine*—a hair of the dog, man."

"I'm afraid you devoured the dog between you, hair and all, before you fell asleep," said Lester, who had recovered something of his usual good-humour.

"And who the devil are you? Damn you, Warden, you can't have drunk the whole of the three bottles to your own cheek."

"Will you have some tea?"

"Faugh!"

"Well then, you won't have anything at all," said Warden, who had begun to guess how his enemy ought to be treated.

"I call that damned unfriendly of you. I shall go at once—and damn me if I ever come here again. Warden, you're a —, and I always thought so, and now I know it. By the way," he added, feeling in his pockets, "I'm cleaned out. Could either of you fellows lend me half-a-crown?"

"And is this the Dick Barton that was to do such wonderful things?" asked Lester, as the door closed. "How does he live?"

Warden shrugged his shoulders contemptuously.

"So much for genius!" said the practical man.

"Poor devil!" said Lester, "one must try and give him a chance—what's the good of being in the house else?" And so, after a

renewal of his thanks, he too left the room, leaving Warden to 'Coke upon Littleton.'

Warden did work at 'Coke upon Littleton;' but he also worked at something else besides.

CHAPTER XII.

Warden had no particular inclination to spend his Christmas at home: he was not a person of domestic tendencies; his father bored him, and he was not fond of the society of his father's friends. Not even did he care to cultivate the acquaintance of Mr Brown, even though he was an attorney's managing clerk. But still, much to his sister's delight, he announced at the beginning of December that he was about to pay them a short visit. It was nothing more than a very ordinary sort of coincidence that Miss Raymond was going to spend her Christmas at Earl's Dene. Hugh ought to have spent his there also: but he was a man of many engagements, and felt rather afraid of his visit besides, for he also felt instinctively that the breach between himself and his aunt had practically begun, and that he should, as it were, be making Earl's Dene his home under false pretences. Moreover, he knew that his friend was going down, and fancied that it would be better for his own cause if he himself kept out of the way and left the field clear for the abler strategist.

And so Warden went down accordingly, listened to his father's complaints of the rival doctors, and of the pane of glass through which the wind still blew, received the admiring homage of his sister, heard Mr Brown retail the small gossip of the place, and dined upon lukewarm mutton. But he did not let his domestic enjoyments detain him from making an early call at Earl's Dene.

He found Miss Clare not improved in health by any means; but she gave him a most cordial welcome, not only for his own sake, but because she hoped to get news

of Hugh in respect of the matter about which she was most anxious.

"You still see something of Hugh?" she asked, after a word or two of greeting.

"Oh, very often. I think I may consider that we are friends."

"I hope so. I was in hopes that he would have spent Christmas down here."

"You see he has so many engagements."

"Still I should have thought he might have been able to spare a day or two. But this is but a dull house for a young man to come to, I know."

Warden looked his protest.

"By the way, I have one visitor, though—your old acquaintance, Miss Raymond of New Court."

"Indeed?"

"She, too, has seen something of you in town, she tells me. By the way, as we are talking about Denethorp people, what has become of those Leforts since the father met with that unfortunate accident?"

"Oh, they are in London, doing what they can."

"Miss Raymond tells me that the niece means to go on the stage."

"Yes: I believe that is so."

Of course she was vainly trying to get an opening for finding out whether and to what extent Warden was in her nephew's confidence. At last, true to her despotic instincts that never allowed her to procrastinate or beat about the bush, she said,

"I, too, may consider you one of Hugh's friends?"

"One of his and yours, Miss Clare."

"I am not going to ask you to commit a breach of confidence:

besides, I know that you would not do so, if I did. But has he ever mentioned these young women to you?"

"In what way?"

"You know there were some absurd stories about him here?"

"Oh, at the election. No one minds election reports."

"You see so much depends upon the marriage of one in Hugh's position."

"No doubt."

"It would never do even to run the risk of Earl's Dene falling into the hands of an actress—of a Papist."

"Of course not."

"You see, living as I do, there are so few people I can trust—and I suppose that as one gets older one gets more anxious and nervous—at least I am anxious that Hugh, who is as if he were my son, should do rightly in everything. Now you, who are his friend, and have some influence, I know——"

"I fear, Miss Clare, you overrate my power."

"Oh, no. Men listen often to their friends when they are deaf to their mothers—you can talk to him as men talk. You understand me?"

"You may be sure that any influence I may have over Mr Lester shall be used as you would approve and for his real good."

"You promise?"

"Faithfully."

"Thank you, Mr Warden. You have taken a weight off my mind. You will, then—you of all people will know how—save him from the danger of—you know what I mean?"

"I promise to do my best."

"You might tell him, in case of necessity, what I have told him also—that if he continues to be bent upon this impossible marriage——"

"I would rather hear no more, Miss Clare."

"But you had better. You know that I always do what I say; and

if he is obstinate, Alice Raymond shall be mistress of Earl's Dene. And you may tell Miss Lefort so, also. I imagine that she, at least, will not be obstinate when she hears that."

That she was perfectly in earnest was sufficiently proved by her forgetting her pride so far as to take one of her subjects into her private confidence in order that she might work with greater certainty. But it must, nevertheless, have been a bitter pill for her to swallow.

"Surely, Miss Clare, you cannot be speaking seriously?"

"But I am, indeed. And after all it is not likely that he should really be guilty of such madness."

"Most unlikely, I should say."

"But still you will remember what I have said; you will watch, warn, save him, if you can—and that by *any* means?"

"I will do all I can."

"I felt sure that I might rely upon you; otherwise I should not have said what I have to you. Be sure that we shall not be ungrateful."

"I hope you do not think—is it not only my duty?"

"But we have our duties, too, and gratitude is among them," she said, in royal fashion, as she held out her hand. "And now you will stay to lunch? I see Miss Raymond coming back from her ride."

Miss Clare, as queen of Dene-thorp, of course considered herself as only giving orders to, and promoting to high trust and confidence, one of her subjects who had proved his devotion to the reigning house when she gave Warden charge of the crown-prince, and not as in any way laying a burden upon him. She felt gratitude, as she said; but, in her eyes, he was doing no more than his duty to his liege lady in undertaking to keep her heir from forming an unsuitable alliance. What his own private views might be were nothing to her, nor did she even remember that he might

possibly have any. And if he had, what could they matter even to himself when the interests of Earl's Dene were concerned? Nevertheless the interview did open out to him a new and strangely exciting train of thought, of which the burden was, "If it were not for Marie!"

Putting her out of the question altogether—supposing there were no such person in existence—it would of course be open to him to try his chance with Miss Raymond, as anybody else might, without any reference to the coming estrangement between Miss Clare and her nephew. It was true that his birth was not such as to facilitate his entry into a county family. But then would he be the first poor gentleman who had, by marrying an heiress, founded a family of his own? *Ce que femme veut, Dieu le veut*; and fortune favours the bold. His father and sister might be provided for elsewhere; and for himself, he felt that he could hold his own were he to marry into the ranks of the peerage itself. After all, as the son of a professional man, as a fellow of his college, as a distinguished member of his university, as a barrister—a word that then meant far more than it has since come to mean—as, in the future, a member of Parliament, and heaven knows what besides, it would soon be forgotten that the professional man whose son he was was only Doctor Warden of Denethorp, and that his mother was the daughter of a Redchester druggist. This he might have done as a matter of course; but now he felt, after his interview with Miss Clare, that, were he only free, he might do something very much more. He smiled to himself as he remembered how he felt when he traversed, in Hugh Lester's company, the stage of road between Redchester and Denethorp. If Hugh should marry Angélique, then Miss Raymond would be a prize worth the winning indeed. He knew as well as anybody that Miss Clare invariably

meant what she said, and he thought he knew how to manage her, in case Miss Raymond proved favourable. If it were only not for Marie!

But as, unfortunately, it was impossible to put Marie out of the question, it was all impossible together. Still he was not one to throw away even the odd ends of string, the scraps of paper, and the stray pins that chance affords. "Waste not, want not"—everything may come in usefully some day. At all events, there was no use in being impolite to Miss Raymond; and so, to avoid Charybdis he fell into Scylla—that is to say, he made himself very polite to her indeed. Nor did the young lady herself object, for she had a tendency to hero-worship, and since the contest Warden had remained the hero of the Tory part of the country-side.

He enjoyed his lunch very much, nor did he again remember his wife's existence until he was half-way home. And then, when he did call her to mind, he was angry, not with himself, but with Circumstance, who had treated him so unfairly and so unkindly. At last, like everybody who gets angry with Circumstance, he began to recollect certain bits and scraps of consolation with which men flatter themselves that they are not such very poor creatures after all, but, indeed, rather the contrary—such as "Man is the architect of his own fortune;" "The mould of a man's fortune is in his own hands;" "*Vouloir c'est pouvoir*;" "The wise man makes more opportunities than he finds;" "*Aut inveniam viam aut faciam*;" and a hundred other similar specimens of proverbial nonsense.

In a mind like his, no practical idea that is once sown remains quite barren. He could not entertain the thought that he might, under other circumstances, have become master of Earl's Dene without at the same time entertaining the wish that it were still possible; and he could not entertain the wish without being led to consider whe-

ther, after all, its fulfilment were quite as impossible as it at first sight appeared. "Is, in truth, anything impossible?" he thought; "Napoleon denied the existence of the word."

People who quote the authority of Napoleon in this matter, generally seem to forget that their authority lived to find himself mistaken.

"So you've been up at Madam's, have you?" asked Mark's father, as they sat over the fire after dinner. "Quite right. The old lady's been uncommon civil since the election. Game, you know, and all that. We may cut out that ass Smith yet, my boy. Miss Raymond's up there too, isn't she? Ah, a fine match that'll be for Master Hugh."

"Ah," winked Mr Brown, "we know something about that, Mr Mark; don't we?"

"Do we?"

"I expect Miss Alice was nigh losing our member. We know when. I wonder what's become of Miss Mary now, up in town?" Here he gave another wink. "And I wonder whether our member knows? For my part, though, I always thought 'twas the other one had most style."

Mark felt a strong desire to kick him. After all, Marie was his wife, much as he might wish that she were not.

"You seem to know much more about it than either I or Mr Lester," he answered, with a coldness that made Mr Brown stare.

"I wonder when the wedding will be, and if it'll be at Dene-thorp!" exclaimed Lorry. "I think Miss Raymond so pretty, Mark; don't you?"

"I know some one prettier," said Mr Brown, with a leer at Lorry, for which her brother would have gladly

kicked him again, especially as he saw that she only blushed.

"By the way, Brown," asked the surgeon, "that's a bad case up Gorsley way. Have you anything to do with it?"

"We, Mr Warden? We don't do criminal business. But what's the rights of it?"

"Why, hanging's about the rights of it, I reckon. Man and wife, you know—tired of her, and keeping company with another woman. She won't have him till the wife's dead. So what does he do, when his wife's asleep in bed, but just quietly go to work with his fingers and thumbs, you know, till what d'ye-call was induced, and she went off the hooks. I made the *post mortem* with what's his name of Gorsley—brain congested, lungs gorged, tongue protruding half an inch, no end of *ecchymosis* just where it ought to be, you know—larynx, and *conjunctivæ*, and all that——"

"And how did he kill her?" asked Mr Brown.

"Why, aren't the appearances as clear as daylight? Throttled her, of course, and no mistake about it."

"La, how horrid!" exclaimed Lorry.

"H'm!" said Mr Brown; "marry in haste, and repent at leisure. Well, what I always say is, as a man makes his bed, so he must lie."

Why should Mark Warden, the scholar and the gentleman, have felt a half-guilty sensation at the narration of this brutal and vulgar crime? But he did feel it: nor was Mr Brown's not very original remark without its sting. After the quotations from historians and philosophers in which he had been indulging, the homely platitude of the lawyer's clerk was a terrible piece of bathos; but it was not ineffective.

CHAPTER XIV.

Night brings counsel. "Well, I suppose I must yield to fate,"

was Warden's first thought when he awoke the next morning. "But

still——” he added ; which meant that he had at all events made up his mind that his friend should marry Angélique Lefort. He could not see his way to the end of the game ; but still that was no reason why he should not play such good cards as he held in his hand. Something might come of them, and nothing could come of his keeping his word to Miss Clare. Indeed, he had, after all, promised nothing definitely.

He did not return to London at once, but was a good deal about Earl's Dene—making love, any one would almost have said who did not know the circumstances. To a certain extent he was not altogether responsible for the length to which he went in cultivating the acquaintance of Miss Raymond ; for the flirtation naturally gratified the vanity from which marriage does not exempt a man, and he thought he could trust himself not to go too far. He also made himself extremely useful to Miss Clare herself, and, in spite of his dislike for Mr Brown and his fellows, strove, not unsuccessfully, to make himself popular among them also ; at all events, to make them look up to him, which, with his views, was more to the purpose than making himself popular. Meanwhile, it was characteristic of him that, while dreaming of shadows, he never for a moment loosened his hold upon the substance, for he never passed a day without reading law for a certain number of hours.

At last, however, the day came when it was necessary for him to return, and of course he called at Earl's Dene to say good-bye. His last words to Miss Clare consisted of a renewal of his promise to do what he could to prevent her nephew's marriage. To Miss Raymond he bade a simple “good-bye”—spoken, however, in a tone that meant much, and that made her think. Nor were her thoughts unkindly. She was not likely to fall

in love consciously without being asked to do so ; but she had got as far as thinking it by no means unlikely that she might be asked. Besides this, she could not help seeing, with a woman's instinct in such matters, that Warden was strong enough to be her master ; and when a woman sees that, she is half won already. It need not be said that her first unreasonable and unconscious prejudice against him had taken flight ages ago.

As soon as he found himself once more in London, it was, no doubt, his duty to pay his wife a visit ; but he, thinking no doubt that that would keep, and that other things would not, first called at the chambers of the pleader with whom he was reading, and then went to Hugh's lodgings in Bruton Street.

“Warden ! what an age you've been gone ! and what news, old fellow ? Will you have some breakfast ? When did you come back ? Did you see my aunt ? Did you say anything to her ? Did——”

“I saw Miss Clare,” answered Warden, gravely, in a tone which made Hugh's countenance fall.

“Well ?”

“She says—well, the long and short of it is, that if I were you I would just give the whole thing up.”

“Then there goes Earl's Dene—that's all.”

“Why, you don't mean to say——”

“I do, though. I'm sorry, of course, for her sake, you know ; but she must make up her mind to marry a poor man instead of a rich one : and so that's over.”

“But, my dear fellow, just think——”

“Angélique has more claim on me now than my aunt, after all. And my aunt herself wouldn't want me to be such a cur as to sell my love and my faith for all the land in the world.”

“Your wife ought to be a proud woman, Lester.”

“Rubbish ! And so there's an

end of it. I'll write to my aunt at once."

Warden laid his hand on his shoulder. "I have been but a bad ambassador, I fear," he said; "but——"

"And I have not thanked you for troubling you about my affairs. I only wish I could see my way to thanking you as I should like to."

"Not a word about thanks, pray! But, I was going to say, I should advise you not to write just now."

"But surely——"

"I know what you would say. But had you not better wait until you have seen Miss Lefort herself?"

"You speak as though you doubted her."

"Not the least. But——"

"But what, then?"

"Why, the result would be this: Miss Clare would probably not answer you. But she would leave no stone unturned to prevent this marriage. She would take care to let Miss Lefort know that by marrying you she was ruining you for life. And if Miss Lefort is as generous as I have no doubt she is, she would refuse to marry you,—not for her own sake, but for yours. No; see her first—this very day, if you like—and get her promise; and then write to Miss Clare as soon as you please."

"I daresay you are right. Then I will go to Angélique at once."

Warden considered. It was more than probable that Angélique, when she learned from her lover how matters stood, would throw him over, not for his sake, but for her own. It was not from any special knowledge of the character of Angélique that the thought arose, but rather from a knowledge of what he himself would have done had he been in the same situation. Indeed, would not any man or woman of sense have done so? So he had to a slight extent to draw upon his imagination.

"By the way," he said, "I doubt if you can see her to-day."

"Why not?"

"I have been at the house, and she will not be in till evening."

"And in the evening she will be at the theatre. It is damned unlucky."

"At the theatre?"

"Yes;—don't you know? She is going to come out for the first time."

"The devil she is! I hope Miss Clare won't know that, at all events. She will object ten times more if she hears that your wife has appeared on the stage."

"Then it will be all the more for me not to let Angélique suffer for so unjust a prejudice," said Hugh, loftily. "I will see her this evening, anyhow,—at the theatre itself, for that matter. But don't go, old fellow. How the deuce is one to get through the day till then?"

"I would stay with pleasure, only I have an engagement that I must keep. Shall I look you up to-night, after the play is over?"

"Do;—and if I'm not in, wait for me."

Warden at once caught the first coach that was passing.

"To Berners Street!" he said; and then settled himself down to think; an art that he had of late been cultivating rather too assiduously in some directions, and neglecting too much in others.

Fortunately, he was not obliged to lose any time, for Marie was out and Angélique at home. She was reading a manuscript, and the room looked more like a milliner's workshop than ever. She rose as he entered, and smiled graciously.

"Ah, Mr Warden," she said, "you have come just in time."

"For what?"

"To-night I make my *début*; and I shall expect you to come and hiss me."

"I will come, of course; but otherwise I do not intend to be alone in a crowd. What is the part? and where?"

"Here is the bill."

"But I don't see your name?"

"But you see that of Miss March—"

mont,—we are the same. I play Donna Inez."

"By the way, I have seen a friend of ours, who will also come, and not hiss you, I should say."

"And who is that, pray?—Miss Raymond?"

"Scarcely, seeing that she is in —shire. Shall you be angry if I tell you a secret?"

She looked at him quickly and sharply.

"I suppose you mean that you want to tell me one?"

"Exactly so."

"And that you have come on purpose to tell it?"

"That is so, also."

She looked a little anxious. "You had better tell it then, and run the risk of my being angry. I adore secrets."

"It is this, then. I have just come from Denethorp."

"Is that all?"

"Not quite. When there, I did myself the honour of calling at Earl's Dene." She watched his face, and saw that he was smiling in a way that half alarmed, half reassured her—as, in fact, he intended. He went on. "I do not know whether you know that the great Madam Clare has some belief in my wisdom?"

"You are very mysterious."

"Well, it seems that you have made a conquest."

She tossed her head. "It is very possible," she answered.

"So possible that it must be so. But, I fear, not of the great lady."

"And why do you say all this to me?"

"To fulfil a promise. To tell you that she will never consent to her nephew's marriage."

"Indeed! I am very much obliged to her. And, in return for your secret, I will give you a piece of advice."

"What is that?"

"Not to meddle with what does not concern you."

"I beg your pardon. Mr Lester

is my friend; and what concerns him, concerns me also."

"Then speak to him, if you think I am not fit to marry him. I think it scarcely usual among gentlemen to do as you seem to be doing. You can know nothing about the matter. Are you in his confidence as well as in Miss Clare's?"

"I am: and I have spoken to him also."

"And he sent you here?" She began to be terribly afraid that her game was lost—that Hugh had yielded, and had been ashamed to tell her so in person. Like Mark Warden, she was apt to judge of what other people would do by what she would have done in their place; and she, too, was a person of sense.

"No—not at all."

"Then why do you come?"

"To appeal to your generosity on behalf of my friend."

"Ah,—I begin to understand. You mean that Miss Clare will disinherit him?"

"I fear so. Indeed, I am sure of it, if——." He paused.

"If what?"

"If he remains true to you; if he marries you; and—if *she knows it*." He spoke the last words with a marked and special emphasis, which she could not fail to perceive.

He saw that she understood as much of his thought as he wished her to understand. But she looked inquiringly, nevertheless.

"You know how straightforward he is," he replied to her look.

"That is true. And I, too, should be the last to advise deception. You are right. It is not for me to ruin him."

She spoke so seriously that he stared at her for a moment in astonishment. Then he smiled.

"You will refuse to marry him, then?"

She turned away her face.

"If it must be so," she said in a low tone.

"And about this evening?" He

did not think it worth while to waste words of sympathy.

"Let him come to the theatre."

"Of course you will not tell him that I have told you this? I have been acting solely for his interest: and I should not like him to quarrel with me for having acted as his friend."

"Of course not. And now I dare say you will not mind leaving me

to myself. 'If she knows it!'" she added to herself, with a smile. "Well, I think I am able to keep a secret from Madam Clare."

"Well, I have kept my promise," thought Warden to himself. "If Hugh Lester will make a fool of himself, that is not my fault."

And to a certain extent he really persuaded himself that it was not.

CHAPTER XV.

So far as the world at large was concerned, this was the history of that evening, according to the dramatic critic of the 'Trumpet':—

"Last night was produced at this house, for the first time, a new musical drama entitled 'Faith's Reward,' written by Mr —, the music being composed by M. Prosper. The plot is briefly this," &c. "The music is excellent," &c. "Miss Marchmont, the *débutante*, however, must be pronounced a failure. She is remarkably pretty, and that is always something; but, unfortunately, in her case, that is all. It often happens that a first appearance calls for indulgence; but when the *débutante*, far from showing any symptom of nervousness, gives, by her carelessness of demeanour and apparent indifference to what she is about, the impression that she thinks herself too good for her audience, for her fellow-actors, and for her part, while her whole style of singing and acting proves that she is very much mistaken, she deserves the reverse of indulgence. We are afraid, however, that an actress so careless of applause will be equally careless of censure; and if that is the case, it will be unnecessary for us to give ourselves the trouble of breaking a fly upon the wheel. We should say that a few years' diligent practice of her profession in the provinces would be extremely beneficial to her, as to many others we

could name whose strength is not equal to their courage."

The truth is, however, that the preoccupation of the *débutante* in question was very excusable indeed. She was not like Warden, who could grasp at shadows without dropping substances; nor could she throw herself into Mr —'s comedy while she was at the same time playing the principal part in her own.

Don Perez.—"I go, then, proud girl; but if I read woman's soul aright, thou wilt yet be the bride of Don Perez."

Donna Inez.—"Never! Is it thus thou readest woman's soul? Think—est thou that all Golconda's treasure would buy the heart of Inez? Rather will I wander in poverty with my Ferdinand than dwell in halls of dazzling light with thee."

"If weeping lips and smiling eyes
Within a mossy dell,
Yet through the roaring of the skies,
Oh bid me not farewell!—"

"Go—and amid thy vassal thralls
Awake the wonder wild;
But Inez scorns thy dazzling halls,
The free, the gipsy child!"—
(*Exit.*)

"Ah, Mr Lester, how you startled me! I scarcely thought you would be here. I am afraid you will not be very well amused."

"Can you give me a minute or two presently? I have something to say to you."

"Not quite so loud, please. They will hear you in the house."

"When can I speak to you?"

"Oh, now if you like; only we had better get out of the way. Now, Hugh, what is it? You look very grave. It is nothing serious?"

"Indeed it is, Angélique. Have you to go on again soon?"

"Not for fifteen minutes, at least."

"I fear I have done wrongly, Angélique, in not having told you before, that in marrying me you run the risk of marrying a very poor man indeed. You were right when you thought that my aunt would object to my marriage."

"You come then—to say good-bye? Do not be afraid. I release you." And she sighed profoundly.

"Angélique! Can you——"

"Good-bye then." She held out her hand, turned away her head, and sighed more profoundly still.

"Do you then not love me?"

She threw him for answer one of those glances through the eyelids in which she excelled.

"Then do not," he replied, "let me hear another word of my being released, unless you fear poverty."

"Hugh!"

"Do you think I come to ask you to release me, Angélique? Did you think me so base—so cowardly? Did you think that I would sell you for Earl's Dene?"

"Ah, if it could be! But no—I cannot consent to be the cause of your ruin."

"Angélique—I shall begin to think that you never really loved me."

"How can you speak so cruelly? You know that I have—that I——"

"do," she added, in a look.

"Angélique, if you do not love me, it is I that release you. Tell me so, and—— But if you do love me, there is only one way in which you can prove your love. I will accept no other."

"If I thought I could really make you happy—could really compensate you for what you lose——"

"Could I be happy without you?"

"I do not deserve so great a sacrifice."

"It is no sacrifice. Do you think I care a straw for what I lose when I think of what I shall gain? I swear by God that I will not have Earl's Dene without you. In any case I will refuse it."

"And is all the sacrifice—I must call it so—to be on your side?"

"Do you not sacrifice yourself sufficiently by giving yourself to me?"

"Ah, Hugh! you are too noble. No, I cannot find it in my heart to struggle against you—against myself—any longer. I will then be everything to you; my life shall be spent in trying to give you no cause for regret."

"Dearest!" Had she not checked him, he, forgetting as he did where they were, would have taken her in his arms at once.

"But—I must impose a condition."

"What condition?"

"After all, I feel that I am acting selfishly. Whatever you may say, I cannot but know that I am indulging my own heart to your loss. For my own sake let me, too, make a sacrifice. I will be your wife—Heaven knows how gladly! But I will not, I ought not, unless you promise me this."

"What is it?"

"A reconciliation with one who loves you as Miss Clare must love you is always possible. I will not let you throw away the chance of it. I declare to you that my whole life would be spent in misery if I thought I had not done all for you that you will let me do. I would have refused you now if I could have done so; but I could not. But I will make another effort to refuse you unless you promise that Miss Clare shall not know of our engagement until we are married."

Hugh looked grave, and almost frowned.

"I am sorry you wish this, Angélique. My aunt has a right to know. Besides, to conceal it would look as though I wished to keep Earl's Dene by deceit—by a sort of fraud."

"Of course she must not think that. But I am so afraid—until we cannot be parted what might not happen to part us? If Miss Clare is so resolved, what might she not do or say——"

"My aunt would never do anything underhand."

"Of course not. But so many things might happen. You promise then? Then now I am quite happy."

"But, dearest——"

"Ah, there is Monsieur Prosper coming to speak to me. But don't go. Monsieur Prosper, this is Mr Lester, an old friend of mine."

"Monsieur, I am charmed. But I would speak with you, Mademoiselle. It is great pity so charming a young lady should never have been in love."

Lester stared at so extraordinary a mode of address. Angélique looked at him and smiled.

"What makes you think I never have been?" she asked Monsieur Prosper. "Is it because I have never been in love with you?"

"Because you sing just as if you had no heart, Mademoiselle. That is why. Excuse me, Monsieur:" and he passed on to resume his post at the conductor's desk. Lester smiled in his turn: he felt that he knew better.

"You know, dearest," he said, when Monsieur Prosper had left them, "that I can refuse you nothing. But if I yield to you in this, there must be no delay in our marriage."

She looked at him affectionately, and suffered him to hold her hand for a moment; but not for so long a moment that the caress could be observed by any curious eyes.

"We will not talk of that to-

night, Hugh. I must consult with Marie, you know. Oh dear—I wish I had not got to go on again."

"And you will not repent joining yourself to one who will have no wealth but your love?"

"How often am I to say no? You are not like Monsieur Prosper, are you, and think that I have no heart?"

"I think so, indeed!——"

And he would no doubt have said something very much to the purpose when "Miss Marchmont!" was called, and she had to leave the drama in which she was acting so well for that in which, according to the 'Trumpet,' she was acting so indifferently.

Her lover was of course in ecstasies. He had never doubted her for a moment; but his triumph was none the less to hear from herself that she was willing to share his fortune whatever it might be. How he was to support her he did not know; but his exultation was too great to be disturbed by a thought which the life that he had hitherto led entirely prevented his being able to bring home to himself. A man who has never known what it is to want for anything, has great faith in the bounty of Fortune. To couple his own name with that of want, is as practically impossible as to seriously and really couple it with that of death. However it may be in metaphysics, no one can, in the actual world of fact, imagine what he has never known. Now Hugh had never in his life known what it was to want a hundred pounds without being able to get it; so that, *a fortiori*, to realise the probable want of a dinner for two, was entirely out of the question. Rich in love and strength, utterly ignorant of what poverty means, he even looked forward to all the pleasures of necessary toil, and forgot to consider the wearing pains and bitter disappointments that accompany it with no less certainty. And surely, so it seemed to him, the strength and energy that had

sufficed to make him the best man of his inches in all —shire, and in Cambridge to boot, would suffice to clear a path through the world that should be just broad enough for himself and for one other. There was time enough yet to determine the precise manner in which he should exert it, and, at least for the present evening, sufficient unto the day was the evil thereof. Of course, Angélique had no need to indulge in gloomy anticipations. She would indeed be but a bungler if Miss Clare did not die in ignorance not only of the engagement, but of the marriage also. She knew her own power over her lover; and as he was honest and unsuspicious, she was not afraid of losing it. Besides, is it not the duty of a good wife to guard her husband's interests when he is inclined to destroy them? This part of her duty, at all events, she was resolved to fulfil to the letter.

The result of her resolution was, that not very long after the *début* of Miss Marchmont the following paragraph appeared in the 'Trumpet':—

"Mr H. Lester, M.P. for Denethorp, has accepted the stewardship of the Chiltern Hundreds. Mr M. Warden of Denethorp has issued an address, in which he professes himself a supporter of the Government, and will, in case of a contest, be influentially supported. It is not improbable that Mr Prescott, who unsuccessfully contested the borough at the last general election, will appear once more in the field."

Poor Angélique! She seemed to have turned out but a female

Alnaschar after all. The future Mrs Lester of Earl's Dene, Lady Lester of Earl's Dene, Countess of Denethorp, and heaven knows what besides, woke up to find herself Mrs Lester of nowhere, the wife of a disinherited man who had not even a profession to fall back upon. Added to this, she had the mortification of seeing that she had been duped most cruelly. Had it not been for Warden's advice, for Warden's suggestions, she would still have been safe; and who but he could have betrayed her secret to Miss Clare? The question, "*Cui bono?*" was only too applicable in its proper sense. It was certainly not herself, and it was as certainly not her husband, for the letter which he had written to his aunt upon his marriage she had taken care should not leave London; so that, as it turned out, she had herself made matters worse by causing Miss Clare to think that her nephew had endeavoured to deceive her.

Hugh was infinitely distressed, not by the loss of Earl's Dene, but by this final proof that she who had been a mother to him all his life had withdrawn herself from him for ever; for if she had loved him as a mother, he felt towards her as a son, and his distress was embittered by her complete silence. It needed all his happiness in the possession of Angélique, and all his consciousness of having done what was right and honourable, to reconcile him to this great loss. As to Warden, now that the field was clear, he was more than ever haunted by the thought, "If it were not for Marie!"

MERCER'S JOURNAL OF WATERLOO.

GENERAL CAVALIÉ MERCER, who died a short time ago at the age of eighty-five, was, in 1815, a smart young captain of horse-artillery. Having been employed in South America in the time of the Peninsular War, he saw no European service till the year of Waterloo. Early in March, the news, which presently agitated all the world, that Napoleon had escaped from Elba, reached Colchester, where Mercer was stationed, and an order for him to prepare for immediate foreign service followed. In April his troop embarked at Harwich for Ostend, to join Wellington's army in Belgium. The English field-artillery was then, as it is now, more splendid and complete in men, horses, and material than any other in Europe; and "G Troop" was held, by more than its Captain, to be the very cream of the cream. His pride in its appearance was very suddenly damped by one of those exigencies of war which foolish officials, dressed in a little brief authority, may easily exaggerate into misfortunes when they bring the misdirected force of their narrow faculties fully to bear on them. No special provision had been made for conveying the troops from the ships to the shore. The English naval officer of the port who boarded the transports solved the difficulty, however, in a very simple manner. The Duke's orders were, he said, positive that no delay was to take place in landing the troops and sending the ships back. He therefore directed his sailors to throw horses, saddlery, and harness into the sea. The ammunition would certainly have followed but for Mercer's earnest remonstrance. Luckily the subsiding tide allowed

the gunners, stripped for the purpose, to go overboard and bring the floating matter to land. The scene resembled a shipwreck much more than a disembarkation, and the men of G Troop would have been proper objects for the charity of a Sailor's Home. But the paternal care which had placed them on shore now suddenly deserted them. Ostend was a fortress, with an English garrison and commandant; but nobody of the Quartermaster-General's or any other department came with orders or consolation of any kind. The troop remained drawn up on the beach amidst heaps of wet harness, in a tremendous thunderstorm, till night came on; and the rising tide threatening to wash them all into the sea, they borrowed lanterns from the ships, and amid such a scene as occurs sometimes on a lee-shore, on which wrecks are going to pieces, the officers and men succeeded in saving themselves and their charge. By the advice of a chance acquaintance whom he met on the quay, Captain Mercer now started with his half-drowned troop, without a guide, to seek the shelter of some sheds, situated beyond a town which he had never before heard of; and he succeeded in reaching them about three in the morning, without other mishap than the loss of some horses (afterwards recovered), which had, not injudiciously, made off into the country. It is evident that nothing which occurred in the Crimea or the Bosphorus could excel this proceeding in its contempt of foresight, arrangement, and common-sense; and the sagacious reader may perhaps infer, seeing how it took place after long years of war, and in a district controlled by a great commander, that

when such blunders are not heard of, it is not so much because they are not committed, as because they are not found out. If a special correspondent had been present in Belgium at that time, the world would have read a glowing account of the mismanagement, though, to be sure, the Duke might possibly have hanged him. The fact is, that the only way to guard against such mishaps is to fill all responsible posts with fit men, and then to allow them reasonable discretionary power. Rigid orders, in such cases, are suitable only for fools, and fools are very apt to misapply them.

After this rude baptism by water, G Troop, however, led for some time a very pleasant life of it amid the fertile fields and kindly people of Belgium. It was literally in clover, the whole land blushing with the succulent herbage, which soon restored the horses to bloom and beauty. In those days, Mercer says, it was an established theory among mounted officers that the more flesh horses could be made to carry, the more they had to lose, and consequently (such was the logic) the better would they bear privation. It may perhaps be doubted whether soldiers of the Banting type are best fitted for campaigning; at any rate, recruiting has not hitherto been conducted on that basis; and what is sauce for the rider may be sauce for the steed in this particular. Nevertheless, the practice of bringing troop-horses as nearly as possible to the condition of prize oxen was general amongst cavalry and artillery, and received the sanction of the highest authority; for we are told that had any officer allowed his horses to appear thinner than those of his neighbours, "the quick eye of the Duke would have seen the difference, asked no questions, attended to no justification, but condemned the unfortunate victim of scruples as unworthy of the command he held, and perhaps sent him from the army." The consequence was, that, for fear of the

Duke's censure, plundering of the farmers' fields, which he had strictly forbidden, was a general practice. Nothing throughout the campaign seems to have impressed our diarist more profoundly than the exacting character of the Commander-in-Chief, and his resolution to accept no excuses, reasonable or not, especially in the case of the Artillery, against which arm he entertained a violent and irrational prejudice, as Mercer afterwards experienced to his cost. The following little incident, which occurred to a brother officer, illustrates this weakness:—

"Captain Whinyates having joined the army with the rocket troop, the Duke, who looked upon rockets as nonsense, ordered that they should be put into store, and the troop supplied with guns instead. Colonel Sir G. Wood, instigated by Whinyates, called on the Duke to ask permission to leave him his rockets as well as guns. A refusal. Sir George, however, seeing the Duke was in a particular good humour, ventured to say, 'It will break poor Whinyates's heart to lose his rockets.' 'D—n his heart, sir; let my order be obeyed,' was the answer thundered in his ear by the Duke, as he turned on the worthy Sir George."

Whinyates's heart, however, survived both the threatened loss of his rockets and the other more serious visitation invoked by his illustrious commander; for a dozen years ago he was a general officer and commandant of the garrison of Woolwich.

From Ghent, Mercer's troop was moved to a village near Dendermonde, where the men and horses were quartered in small detachments on the farmers, who received them not only with toleration, but hearty welcome; and the Captain was billeted on a *Juge* of the district, whose business taking him constantly to the neighbouring town, left the guest to the care of the lady of the house, who appears to have performed her duties admirably, and with such thorough goodwill, that when a sudden order came, early in the morning, for the troop to march, she testified great

emotion, even to the shedding of tears. Although habited just as she had jumped out of bed, the costume could scarcely have been unbecoming; for, according to her guest, she was "a fine and handsome woman, perhaps turned of thirty, and possessing a degree of *embonpoint* which, whilst it added dignity to her air, detracted nothing from the grace of her person;" and the parting embrace (consecrated by the presence of the *Juge*, an old gentleman of about sixty, with one eye, who appeared, half dressed, on the scene), must have inspired in the recipient some of the regret at his departure which was so agreeably expressed by the lady. In other respects, also, his quarters had been admirable. He was lodged in two pleasant airy rooms, commanding a delightful view from their numerous windows.

"Three of these in the front commanded a pleasant view over the well-wooded and beautifully-cultivated country beyond the great Brussels road, which ran beneath them—the fields more resembling extensive gardens than anything else. As this part of the house projected beyond the *porte cochère*, a window in the side afforded a peep up the road, terminated by the town of Dendermonde, which hence appeared embosomed in trees. Two fine acacias in front of the gateway overshadowed this with their delicate pensile foliage, and screened it from the hot rays of the afternoon sun. The remaining two windows in the back looked into a delicious and carefully-kept garden, divided as usual by those verdant hornbeam walls into different departments."

His host he suspected of being a Napoleonist, and the same sentiments were attributed by the *Juge* to the farmers and peasantry of the district; yet their reception of the Emperor's enemies had been more than cordial. The fact is, that, like rustic populations in general, they troubled themselves very little about politics, caring neither for Capulet nor Montagu, so that they were left to till their

fields and gather the produce in peace.

The point to which G Troop was now moved, was an old chateau near the banks of the Dender, along the course of which the cavalry and horse-artillery of the British army were cantoned, for the sake of the provisions and forage so plentifully afforded by the rich Pays de Waes, and which were rendered easily available by the navigable river. These advantages, however, were not unattended by a serious drawback. The cavalry was thus collected on the extreme right of the cordon of troops which guarded the approaches to Brussels, and at a most inconvenient distance from many possible points of action; a blot which was hit by the enemy on the 16th June, when the field of Quatre Bras was held by Wellington against odds, while no English sabre struck a blow on it. This chateau, belonging to the Van Vol-den family, had been uninhabited, except by an old gardener and his daughter, for many years; and its aspect at first sight was not inviting, strongly contrasted as it was with the many comforts afforded by the mansion of Madame la Juge. Ancient tapestry and old portraits hung on the walls, and the vast spaces of the floors were almost unbroken by furniture. In such a chamber was the Captain now installed, his occupancy presently imparting to it a not inconsiderable air of comfort. The view on the one side extended over the garden and woods; on the other, over a lawn, surrounded by double rows of noble beeches, orchards, and hop-gardens. Under the windows was a moat, containing fish (which was good) and frogs (which was bad); for the croaking of that teeming population was so annoying as to cause the new lodgers seriously to undertake, in spite of the opposition of the gardener, the task of draining off the water;—an enterprise which, though occasioning great loss to the enemy, resulted in the develop-

ment of a stench so terrible, exhaled by the mud at the bottom, as to leave the victors little cause to rejoice. The requisition for supplies, issued by the Captain on the neighbouring population, produced those remonstrances which old campaigners are familiar with, especially in districts where the people are accustomed to the exigencies of armies. A deputation of the principal inhabitants came to assure him that, though the arrival of the brave English had diffused throughout the commune the most lively joy, yet the place was quite incapable of supporting them, whereas the surrounding villages abounded in food. The Captain, however, was sufficiently an old soldier to disregard this representation; and the intimation that, if the supplies were not presently forthcoming, he should help himself, was attended with the happiest results. About his own breakfasts the diarist expresses himself in rapturous terms: the land flowed with milk, and possibly with honey—eggs and butter were beyond praise; and smoking the cigar of peace after these comforting meals, under the trees of the great avenue, he might almost have forgotten that he was anywhere except in specially good country quarters, and have even, in time, got to imagine himself the lawful lord of the chateau where he exercised so undisputed a sway. All round him were captains of other troops, whose lines had doubtless fallen in equally pleasant places. Hew Ross, who died a field-marshal last year; Gardiner, afterwards Governor of Gibraltar; and Norman Ramsay (whose Christian name Mercer appears to have been ignorant of), the hero of Napier's glowing episode at Fuentes d'Onor, and treated by the Duke with shameful injustice in the Peninsula,—were not far off; with other good soldiers whose names have been less carefully preserved by time and fate. At this time Mercer had occasion to observe an in-

cident which confirms Talleyrand's *mét* about the Bourbons, who had, he said, in their exile, "learnt nothing and forgotten nothing." The Captain had found a piece of ground suitable for drill on the other side of the Dender:—

"Thither, then, we repaired occasionally to practise ourselves, and prevent our people forgetting entirely their drills. Thither also came occasionally his Highness of Berri with his newly-formed corps of cavalry to learn theirs. We frequently met, and as the ground was too confined to admit of both corps working at the same time, the last comers were obliged to dismount and wait until the others had done, for we continued our operations when first on the ground, regardless of the impatience of the royal drill-master, who, though he never said anything to us, did not fail to betray, by a thousand little pettish actions, the annoyance he felt at our want of due respect. One day that they had got in possession and we were obliged to wait, I had a good opportunity of seeing this curious corps and its savage leader. The former presented a most grotesque appearance—cuirassiers, hussars, grenadiers à cheval, and chasseurs, dragoons and lancers, officers and privates, with a few of the new garde de corps, were indiscriminately mingled in the ranks. One file were colonels, the next privates, and so on, and all wearing their proper uniforms and mounted on their proper horses, so that these were of all sizes and colours. There might have been about two hundred men, divided into two or three squadrons, the commanders of which were generals. The Prince, as I have said, was drill-master. A more intemperate, brutal, and (in his situation) impolitic one, can scarcely be conceived. The slightest fault (frequently, occasioned by his own blunders) was visited by showers of low-life abuse—using on all occasions the most odious language. One unfortunate squadron officer (*a general*!) offended him, and was immediately charged with such violence that I expected a catastrophe. Reining up his horse, however, close to the unhappy man, his vociferation and villanous abuse were those of a perfect madman; shaking his sabre at him, and even at one time thrusting the pommel of it into his face, and, as far as I could see, pushing it against his nose! Such a scene! Yet all the others sat mute as

mice, and witnessed all this humiliation of their comrade, and the degradation of him for whom they had forsaken Napoleon."

A very singular character resided in the neighbourhood—an old nobleman of the race of the Visconti of Milan, who, by right of his mother, inherited the Belgian chateau and estate of Gaesbeke. He had served as an Austrian hussar against the great Frederick; and after travelling, when peace came, over most of Europe, had taken such a fancy to the manners of the Turks, that, on returning to reside on his Netherlands property, he preserved the Oriental costume, and, says Mercer, "in every other way conformed to their customs." When some troops had been billeted on the Marquis d'Acornati (that was his name) without consulting him, he had placed himself in a state of siege, and armed his domestics to resist; but on the commander of the detachment, who had learnt something of his peculiarities, addressing him in such terms as Don Quixote might have used in parleying with an imaginary constable of a castle, he received and entertained the visitors with the greatest courtesy. This old gentleman was enormously rich, possessing great estates in other countries, and many fine houses in Brussels; but he lived in the most desolate and cheerless fashion in his decaying chateau, sleeping in a hole which "one might have imagined to be the abode of some poor devil whom charity had admitted to occupy a nook in the deserted mansion," and subsisting on vegetables and water. There was nothing miserly, however, in these frugalities, for his charities and gifts to his relations were magnificent, and he gave a splendid *fête* in Brussels to the principal officers of the British army. With the country people he passed for a magician.

At the end of May there was a grand cavalry review in the mea-

dows on the banks of the Dender. Six thousand British horse were there drawn up, with eight batteries of field-artillery, to await the arrival of the Allied Field-Marshal, Wellington and Bluchier. But first the Duc de Berri gave them another taste of his quality:—

"The whole line was in the midst of this business, many of the men even with jackets off, when suddenly a forest of plumes and a galaxy of brilliant uniforms came galloping down the slope from Schendelbeke towards the temporary bridge. 'The Duke!' 'the Duke!' 'the Duke's coming!' ran along the lines, and for a moment caused considerable bustle amongst the people; but almost immediately this was discovered to be a mistake, and the brushing and cleaning recommenced with more devotion than ever; whilst the cavalcade, after slowly descending to the bridge and debouching on the meadows, started at full gallop toward the saluting-point already marked out—the Duc de Berri, whom we now recognised, keeping several yards ahead, no doubt that he might clearly be seen. At this point he reined up and looked haughtily and impatiently about him; and as we were now pretty intimate with his manner, it was easy to see, even from our distant position, that he was in a passion. The brushing, however, suffered no interruption, and no notice was taken of his presence. One of his suite was now called up and despatched to the front. What further took place I know not, but certes! the messenger no sooner returned than his Highness was off like a comet, his tail streaming after him all the way up the slope, unable to keep pace with him, for he rode like a madman, whilst a general titter pervaded our lines as the report flew from one to the other that Mounseer was off in a huff because we did not give him a general salute. Many were the coarse jokes at his expense; and I was amused at one of my drivers, who, holding up the collar from his horse's chest with one hand, whilst with the other he brushed away under it, exclaimed, laughing aloud, 'I wouldn't be one of them 'ere French fellows at drill upon the common tomorrow for a penny; if they're not properly bullyragged, I'm d——.' It turned out afterwards that he had sent his aide-de-camp to claim the reception due to a prince of the blood-royal; but Lord Uxbridge excused himself by say-

ing he had no instructions on that head," &c. &c.

When the Marshals, in the course of their inspection, arrived at G Troop, it was favoured with their special commendation :—

"My vanity on that occasion was most fully gratified, for on arriving where we stood, the Duke not only called old Blucher's attention to 'the beautiful battery,' but, instead of proceeding straight through the ranks, as they had done everywhere else, each subdivision—nay, each individual horse—was closely scrutinised, Blucher repeating continually that he had never seen anything so superb in his life, and concluded by exclaiming, '*Mein Gott, dere is not von orse in dies batterie wick is not goot for Velitt Marshal!*' and Wellington agreed with him. It certainly was a splendid collection of horses. However, except asking Sir George Wood whose troop it was, his Grace never even bestowed a regard on me as I followed from subdivision to subdivision."

It had been known for some time that the Duke had made choice of two positions, in one or other of which, according to circumstances, to meet an attack on Brussels; that of Waterloo, and that of Hal, both covering the junction of important roads from the French frontier upon the Belgian capital. Mercer tells us that Wellington, attended only by an orderly dragoon, frequently visited these positions, studying them deeply, and no doubt arranging in his mind the line of battle at Waterloo as he afterwards drew it up. About the end of May, however, an idea prevailed that the army would advance about the 20th June into French territory—and Mercer, according to the custom of intelligent young officers, drew out a plan of campaign, in which three battles and sixteen marches were to conduct them to Paris. Nor was this notion of an offensive campaign confined to unenlightened speculators, for we know that the Duke himself was actually

sketching one for an Imperial ally at the very moment when Napoleon's army was crossing the Sambre to attack him. But, at any rate, the orders for preparation which had been received foreboded immediate activity; and Mercer, sauntering in his great avenue in the evening of the 15th June, while the other officers had "gone to the ball at Brussels," meditated on his approaching departure from this tranquil spot. The "ball" thus briefly alluded to was the most celebrated of all balls—that given by the Duchess of Richmond—and is doubly secure of immortality by its place in history and in 'Childe Harold.'

On the 16th June, Mercer was roused from bed by an order (undated and informal, and doing very little credit to the administration of the Staff) to march forthwith to Enghien. He is the most candid of diarists, never extenuating his own faults, and he now confesses one which caused him great anxiety and embarrassment, and which may be useful as a warning. Mr Coates, a commissary, had been attached to the troop for the purpose of providing it with rations and forage, and had collected a sufficient number of country waggons and drivers ready for a move. But Mercer's good-nature, incessantly wrought on by the farmers, who wanted their waggons for their own purposes, permitted these vehicles to return to their respective farms on receiving a solemn promise from the authorities of the commune that they should be forthcoming when wanted. As was to be expected, the exigency found him waggonless. His commissary was sent off in all haste to get the indispensable baggage and provision train together. Mercer marched without it, and he saw no more of it till the morning after the great battle.

Arrived at Enghien, he found himself without orders and in the

midst of cavalry columns, all concentrating from their various cantonments on the point of assembly. Applying to General Vandeleur, commander of a light brigade of cavalry, for instructions, he got from that chieftain very little comfort or light in his difficulty. "Whether naturally a savage, or that he feared committing himself," says Mercer, "I know not; but Sir Ormsby cut my queries short with an asperity totally uncalled for. 'I know nothing about you, sir! I know nothing at all about you!' 'But you will perhaps have the goodness to tell me where you are going yourself?' 'I know nothing at all about it, sir! I told you already I know nothing at all about you!'" This kind of bearing, expressing in the most discourteous manner the determination, above all things, to share the responsibilities of nobody else, was but too much in vogue in Wellington's army, and is scarcely yet quite extinct in the service. Following a right instinct, Mercer continued to press forward through Braine-le-Comte, and while halting to water his horses at a pool, was directed by Sir Hussey Vivian, the commander of the other light brigade, an intelligent as well as dashing soldier, to follow his hussars with all speed towards the firing, which was now heard from the field of Quatre Bras. Passing through Nivelles, where the scared population lined the heights to watch the smoke of the conflict, and meeting numerous wounded Netherlanders who had quitted the action in the care of many unwounded comrades, and who spread consternation as they went, Mercer at nightfall, and at the close of the battle, reached Quatre Bras. The troop traversed the field, the tired horses stumbling over corpses as they moved, and crossed the highroad, whilst over it flew the last shot and shells from Ney's artillery. Watering his horses at the well of the farm, and feeding

them from a patch of green wheat left standing amid the wreck of the crops, which had been trampled down in the battle, Mercer bivouacked there.

The Captain, like his superiors, was ignorant that a great battle had taken place a few miles on their left, and fancied, as others did, that a movement in advance would take place against Ney, who, though repulsed yesterday, was still in their front. The orders for retreat that presently arrived were probably at first unaccountable; indeed Mercer makes no allusion to Ligny in his Journal, and may possibly have remained ignorant that such a battle had been fought till after this part of the diary was completed. To his troop was assigned the duty, in conjunction with the light cavalry, of covering the withdrawal of the army from Quatre Bras, an operation involving much more risk than they knew of. For Wellington had never intended to fight on the ground where they stood—there was no position there; his intention had been to move beyond Quatre Bras to the aid of Blücher at Ligny, until Ney's onset forced him to think of defending himself. And now, with his forces still scattered, he was exposed to the attack of Ney in front, while Napoleon might fall upon his flank with the army which had beaten the Prussians. Behind him, on the highroad to Waterloo, was the bridge and narrow winding street of Genappe. Anybody can see how full of peril was such a position; but it was exactly in such cases that Wellington's generalship shone. Regiment after regiment was withdrawn from the centre and marched for Waterloo, while those on the flanks kept closing in and maintaining the narrowing front, till at length, the skirmishers who had veiled the operation being called in, nothing but the rearguard of cavalry and artillery was left on the field. During

any part of this movement, a serious attack by the enemy must have produced disastrous confusion. Luckily it was already completed when Napoleon, who had remained in a state of extraordinary inaction at Ligny, arrived, and seeing his prey escaping, and irritated at Ney's delay, himself (as Gourgaud states) led the pursuit. Mercer saw the French army descend from its position, and, as it disappeared in the hollow, he beheld a sight which he never forgot, nor would ever have forgotten had he lived to the age of Methuselah, for he saw the Emperor ride on to the ridge in front of him, followed by some horsemen, their figures, darkened by a thundercloud which overhung them and the British rearguard, standing out in strong relief from a background illuminated by sunshine. Things were growing critical; no time was to be lost. One discharge from Mercer's guns, and they vanished, just as the French chasseurs dashed over the crest they had stood on; and then, pelted by a deluge of rain, which the firing appeared to have brought down, and amidst deafening peals of thunder and incessant lightning, the cavalry and artillery—those who retreated on the one side, and those who pursued on the other—galloped towards Waterloo. There was a stand and skirmish at Genappe, where the defile, which might have been so disastrous, now stood them in good stead by checking the pursuit. Halting there, beyond the town, G Troop silenced the fire of a French battery; and the English rearguard, resuming the movement, reached the ground of the next day's battle. Mercer, marching quite across the position, bivouacked in an orchard by the high-road, not far from the farm of Mont St Jean.

The engagement had been already in progress for some time next morning before he was aware of its serious character, when at length an

order came, and he was despatched to the right of the second line. Nothing can be clearer than his account of his share in the battle, and, so far as it goes, its accuracy is confirmed by the most authentic narratives. The front of his guns being thrown back almost at a right angle, the ridge on which the right of our front line was posted, above Hougomont, was on his left hand; and in his front, across a deep ravine, were the light cavalry and guns which formed the extreme left of the French. For some time he remained here, fired on by the light French batteries, which did but little mischief, and occasionally exchanging shots with them, while on his left he frequently saw the enemy's cavalry crowning the ridge, riding among the solitary batteries there, and even descending into the hollow towards him. But so far, of the general aspect or course of the action he had no knowledge, for from his position he could see nothing of the ground which had hitherto been the scene of the great attacks. Very differently, however, did the day close for him. About three in the afternoon, Sir Augustus Frazer, commander of the Horse-artillery, rode up, ordered him to limber up to his left, and, his horses' heads thus pointing in the required direction, led them at a gallop to the point where they were needed, the troop flying over the ground as compactly as if at a review. "That's the way I like to see horse-artillery move," said the Duke, as he noticed their advance. Most impressively does Mercer describe their approach to the scene of the main battle. The air grew suffocatingly hot; they were enveloped in thick smoke; and amidst all the thunder of guns and rattle of musketry a mysterious humming noise was heard around, like that which beetles make of a summer's evening, being probably caused either by the fragments of shells in air, or by the jangle of the accoutre-

ments of the great bodies of cavalry in motion on this part of the field. The expected onset of one of these was the cause of Mercer's summons to the front line. In the space between Hougomont and the Charle-roi road a great mass of French heavy cavalry, horse-grenadiers and cuirassiers, had been formed; and scarcely had the leading gun of the battery been placed in action behind a low bank along which ran a narrow road, when the leading squadrons were seen coming on through the smoke. On each side was a square of Brunswickers, falling fast, and unsteady from the cannonade, which, concentrated on this part of the field in order to clear the way for the advance of the cavalry, was of such appalling intensity as has seldom been equalled even in the greatest and hardest-fought battles. "So thick," says Mercer, "was the hail of balls and bullets, that it seemed dangerous to extend the arm lest it should be torn off." His first round of case-shot brought down several of the enemy; the rest of the guns, as they came up, poured in their fire with terrible effect; the cavalry still came on, though checked from a gallop to a walk; the guns, rapidly served, fired into them at close quarters, and, as so often happens in cavalry charges, at the very moment when the advancing squadrons seemed within a stride of victory, they wheeled outwards and galloped to the rear. But the retreat of so dense a column of horse is not easy of accomplishment; jammed together by the opposite influences of advance and flight, they became a stationary, agitated, struggling mob, into which Mercer's guns poured a steady fire. It was then that some despairing of retreat, and others carried away by their ungovernable wounded horses, dashed through the battery and between the squares, to be shot down by the second line. At length the baffled column withdrew down the

hill, leaving in front of the battery a rampart of men and horses. Not for long, however;—their caps were still seen stationary below the slope as they re-formed for attack, and their skirmishers, riding up within forty yards, fired their carbines into the battery; while Mercer, on the road which lay between them and his guns, slowly patrolled to and fro to steady his men. When the column had re-formed, it came on again at a slow resolute trot, led by an officer who, as Mercer was afterwards told, was Ney himself. The battery, loaded this time with case rammed home on the round shot, at the first discharge mowed down nearly the whole front rank, while the solid projectiles penetrated throughout the depth of the column. The same scene of hesitation, struggle, and slaughter was renewed—till again the assailants melted away down the slope; and, as in the first interval between the charges, the French artillery covered the retreat with a tremendous fire upon the squares and batteries. Another advance of the discomfited cavalry, but far less resolute and menacing than the others, was repulsed as before; and as they disappeared, the Duke rode close by the right of Mercer's battery, followed by a long line of infantry—probably Adam's brigade—the right of which was, at that stage of the battle, thrown forward till it rested on Hougomont, forming an enclosing angle with the general line.

Hitherto G Troop, though thus hotly engaged, had fared no worse than its neighbours—better indeed than most of them, being in great degree covered from the enemy's missiles by the low embankment over which it fired. But just as a lull in the fight and lifting of the smoke afforded to Mercer the only extended glimpse of the field which he had obtained, showing him the dark masses of the enemy—some stationary on the opposing

ridge, some descending into the valley towards them—his attention was rudely diverted by a heavy raking fire of artillery, searching his battery at very close quarters from left to right. The guns thus bearing on him appear to have been posted on the nearest extremity of the rising ground, midway between the two armies, which had been occupied by French batteries at different periods of the action, and which the capture of La Haye Sainte would now have rendered a secure position for the enemy. Bringing part of his troop to bear on these terrible assailants, Mercer was responding to their fire when an officer in the Brunswick uniform galloped up to him in great agitation, representing in broken English that he was firing on Prussians. Mercer therefore ceased to fire—but the hostile shot continued to pour in, and he again retaliated till his troop became a total wreck incapable of further action, and was only saved from annihilation by a Belgian battery, which, enfilading the enfiladers, drove them off. Out of his two hundred fine horses a hundred and forty lay dead or dying; out of his six strong gun-detachments only the numbers barely necessary to work three pieces were left, and they utterly exhausted. Blucher would have altogether failed to recognise "the beautiful battery" in the bloody heaps of dead and the few survivors which now represented it. Strange to say, its Captain leaves us in some doubt as to whether it was a Prussian or a French battery which had so maltreated his troop, though, as his men bivouacked where they stood, it would have been easy to have ascertained this next morning. We think, however, that there can be no doubt they were French. The Prussians had not at that time (about four o'clock) developed their attack, the direction of which was not across our front, but in exten-

sion of our left towards Papelotte and Frischermont; and the presence of one of their batteries so close to the Charleroi road at that period of the day is inconsistent with the well-known facts of the battle, especially the capture and occupation of La Haye Sainte by the enemy, which was effected when those charges of the cuirassiers, described by Mercer, were executed.

It will be seen that the pawn G Troop played no mean part on the chessboard in this great game. Its swift orderly advance in the very nick of time, and the spirit and skill which enabled it to pour in so rapid and destructive a fire, saved the two Brunswick battalions from giving way, and this was well known then and afterwards. Its effective action was visible to all in the heaps of dead cavalry lying in its front. The cost at which it had maintained its ground was terribly apparent in its own condition. Sir Augustus Frazer, the commander of the Horse-artillery, told Mercer a few days afterwards at Nivelles, that in riding over the ground "he could plainly distinguish the position of G Troop, from the opposite height, by the dark mass which, even from that distance, formed a remarkable feature in the field." It may be thought that praise and promotion for the troop and its commander were less a favour than a right. Yet not only was their conduct left unnoticed in despatches, and the brevet majority he had so well earned withheld from their Captain, but he was actually deprived afterwards of a troop of horse-artillery given him at the recommendation of his chief, Sir George Wood, that which he commanded in the campaign having properly another first-captain who was otherwise employed, and whose place Mercer filled. Truly, care for the interests of the men who helped to win his battles was not the Duke's strong point, and those might even be considered happy

who did not incur his hostility. Norman Ramsay, rescued for ever from the cold shadow of his great commander's displeasure, in despite of which he was destined to a niche in history, was lying on the same field with a grapeshot through his heart.

The merit of this diary, besides the pleasant candour and picturesque style which distinguish it, is, that it illustrates those byways of war which the historians of campaigns are compelled to overlook, but which, nevertheless, are often signalised by occurrences that have an important influence on the result. For the general reader the interest of such narratives is much greater than that of general expositions, or scientific accounts, of the course of campaigns and battles. The plans and difficulties and successes of the chief of an army belong to a sphere of thought and action where few, unless prepared by long study of such subjects, can enter; but everybody can sympathise with the cares of the subordinate officer or the soldier. The recognition of this truth, and of the wide field which was thus opened to the military novelist, has led to the extensive popularity of the works of MM. Erckmann-Chatrian, who have painted to the life the hopes and fears of the French conscript, and the feelings of the French soldier, throughout those wars over which such a blinding haze was for half a century cast by the splendour of Napoleon's career. Strangely enough, in one of those novels, the details of which are evidently acquired from eyewitnesses, the conscript who is the hero confirms, from the opposite side of the field, Mercer's account of his share in the battle. "Through the smoke I saw the English gunners abandon their pieces, all but six guns sheltered under the road, and almost immediately our cuirassiers were upon the squares, whose fire was drawn in zigzags. Now, I thought, those gunners will

be cut to pieces; but no, the devils kept firing with grape, which mowed them down like grass." And not only to the general reader are such narratives interesting, but they often throw side-lights, which, for the military student, help to illumine what would else be obscure and unaccountable. However well acquainted with this, one of the best known and most profusely illustrated of campaigns, the reader may be, he will scarcely fail to obtain a still closer appreciation both of its leading events and its particular circumstances by a perusal of Mercer's diary. Accustomed as we have been in later times to the sharp criticisms which military blunders evoke, it is clear enough that, subjected to a similar scrutiny, the campaign of 1815 would have afforded material for comments no less severe. The service of the Staff appears to have been particularly ill regulated. It is well known that Wellington remained ignorant of Napoleon's advance into Belgium for an incredibly long time; and there are numerous proofs in this Journal of inconceivable neglect or equally inconceivable incompetency in the transmission of instructions on occasions of vital importance. Luckily for us, the Staff duties were equally ill performed in Napoleon's army, as was exemplified by many incidents, notably by the total failure of communication between Grouchy's wing and the main body. The system of preserving all the links in the chain of responsibility, and leaving each particular set of duties, from the highest to the lowest, to be executed by the proper official, seems to have been but imperfectly understood by us; and we find Lord Anglesea, the commander of the British cavalry, exposing himself to imminent risk of capture, by personally directing the movements of two of Mercer's guns during the retreat from Quatre Bras. The character of Wellington is seen in much less

favourable light in the familiar aspect than in the historical view. While obviously deficient in the elements of popularity which Napoleon could display so effectively, he could be no less capricious, harsh, and even unjust, to his subordinates, than his great antagonist. His prejudice against the Artillery, both absurd and impolitic, continued to manifest itself not only throughout the war, but throughout his life, and probably had considerable share in perpetuating the disqualifications of officers of this scientific branch for employment on the general Staff, which distinguish our army, by no means honourably, amid the military systems of Europe. The school of Wellington was formed at a time when intelligence was not deemed of much importance in either officer or soldier, when the old Prussian system was still paramount, and when machine-

like movements and machine-like obedience were held to be the chief requisites for troops. That school still has its representatives, who decry, not unnaturally, science which they do not possess, and progress which they cannot understand, and whose opinions, unluckily, are in some cases clothed with greater authority than they deserve. Mercer was no mere *sabreur*, capable of nothing but military duty, and that only in a narrow-minded way, but a refined gentleman and intelligent officer, such as a member of a highly-educated corps should be. Amid all the distractions of the campaign, he had an eye for men and manners and scenery, and his very interesting diary bears all the marks of being the produce of a mind perfectly honest and unprejudiced, as well as cultivated and observant.

OUR IRONCLAD SHIPS.

WE can give no better title to this paper than that of the book we propose to take under consideration—Mr Reed's late work on our armoured fleet.* To this gentleman's facile pen the country is indebted for a very clear exposition of the state of our ironclad navy, the value of which is all the greater from its issuing forth out of the portals of the Admiralty enriched from the many sources of official knowledge and experience which are inaccessible to the outside world. Whether it is altogether prudent to publish so fully the details of construction and equipment of our ships may be questioned. The public are undoubtedly the gainers; but so are our neighbours across the Channel, and our cousins on the other side of the Atlantic. However, we may leave that question to the authorities, and accept Mr Reed's book as a welcome provision for the wants of the public in their information on this subject.

The metamorphosis which our ironclad fleet has undergone in the last ten years is as complete as it has been rapid. The 68-pounders of the earlier ships have given place to the 600-pounders of the present day; the original $4\frac{1}{2}$ -inch armour-plating has increased to a foot of solid iron on the sides of vessels now building; the graceful form and tapering spars of the *Warrior* and her congeners have been succeeded by ugly ram-bows, hideous sterns, and stunted masts; while, in the method of construction, the change has been equally great.

To a Conservative Board of Admiralty belongs the credit of the commencement of our sea-going ironclad fleet—we do not now speak of floating batteries; and it was under Sir John Pakington's admini-

stration of the navy in 1859 that the *Warrior*, the pioneer of the new type of fighting ships, was designed and commenced. Before the close of the year three other vessels—the *Black Prince*, *Defence*, and *Resistance*—were laid down, the construction of these ships being called for in haste in order to regain our position with respect to France, who had taken the lead of us in this new description of vessel, as she had done previously in respect of the floating batteries. Before this time, in the construction of wooden ships, the proportion of length to breadth had been gradually increasing, for the sake of combining a high rate of speed with capacity for stowage, until in the *Mersey* and *Orlando* frigates a length of 300 feet had been attained, or a proportion to breadth of 5.8 to 1. When the necessity for building ironclad vessels arose, the constructors of the navy were called upon to design ships which should carry a certain thickness of armour, steam at a high rate of speed, and stow a fair amount of coal. Following the same general principles which had governed the construction of our fast wooden frigates and line-of-battle ships—the finest of their respective classes in the world—it was found necessary to give enormous length to the new ships, in order to fulfil these conditions; and therefore the *Warrior* and *Black Prince* were no less than 380 feet long, or in the proportion of length to breadth of 6.5 to 1. Even with these great dimensions, the ships were only partially protected by armour, the bow and stern being wholly undefended; but the promised speed of 14 knots was fully attained, and the ships, as far as they went, were

* *Our Ironclad Ships; their Qualities, Performances, and Cost.* By E. J. Reed, C.B., Chief Constructor of the Navy. Murray.

completely successful. The Defence and Resistance were of considerably smaller dimensions, being 100 feet shorter, and their speed was rather under 12 knots. The system of undefended extremities being very objectionable, leaving, as it did, some of the vital parts of the ship, including the rudder and steering gear, completely exposed, the next step was to build vessels wholly armoured; and as the highest rate of speed was still desired, the new designs required a yet greater length, so the three ships of the Minotaur class were 400 feet long, the proportion to breadth being 6.7 to 1. These vessels were plated throughout their entire length with armour an inch thicker than the Warrior's, but with only half the thickness of wood backing, and they equalled the Warrior in speed. Meanwhile two other short vessels, the Hector and Valiant, also partially plated, had been built; they were the same length as the Defence and Resistance, but with rather more beam. The above ships were all built of iron, and by contract, as no appliances had hitherto existed in the dockyards for iron shipbuilding. But the necessary arrangements for that purpose having been made in Chatham Yard, the Achilles was laid down there in 1861, being of the same dimensions as the Warrior, but having a belt of armour round the bow and stern at the water-line in addition to the protected part amidships.

The conversion of some of our line-of-battle ships into ironclads having been determined on—at the instance, it is said, of Lord Palmerston—this work was begun in the same year, and the Caledonia class was the result. They were plated fore and aft, some with 4½-inch and others with 6-inch armour, and they realised a speed of about 13 knots; the proportion of length to breadth being 4.7 to 1, or less than any of the ships built as ironclads up to that time. This class

of vessels, of which seven have been converted, are very similar to the French ships of the Gloire class, and they have answered well.

Some time before this, Captain Cowper Coles's plans for cupola or shield ships, as they were then called, had been submitted to the Admiralty; but while the great merit of this invention had been generally acknowledged by seamen and scientific men, the Admiralty hesitated to give it a trial, though strongly urged to do so. A detailed account of this ingenious plan, with drawings, appeared in this Magazine for December 1860; and the civil war in America breaking out in the following year, the idea was caught up by Ericsson, and the Monitor class of vessels was the result. The value of the invention being then made manifest, the Admiralty, yielding to pressure from a high quarter, at last consented to give Captain Coles's plans a trial; and in 1862 the Prince Albert was ordered to be built of iron on his system, and the Royal Sovereign three-decker was cut down to be converted into a turret-ship. Meantime Mr E. J. Reed had been writing in the press, proposing plans for ironclad ships of small dimensions, and he soon succeeded in prevailing upon the Admiralty to adopt his propositions. Three corvettes, which were on the stocks in various stages of progress, were handed over to him to be converted into ironclads upon his plans. They were the Research, the Favourite, and the Enterprize; and soon afterwards the Zealous, a two-decker, was also ordered for conversion in a similar manner.

Such was the state of our ironclad navy when, in 1863, Mr Reed, then an untried shipbuilder—for none of the above vessels had been launched—and known only by his writings in the press, was appointed Chief Constructor of the Navy over the heads of the experienced men who had designed our splendid

unarmoured fleet, and also the noble ships of the Warrior and Minotaur classes of ironclads. This appointment gave rise to a general burst of indignation, both in Parliament and elsewhere. It was considered that a dangerous precedent had been established, and that great injustice had been committed. No one disputed Mr Reed's talents, but his want of experience in the practical work of his profession was a matter of common notoriety; while the general feeling of mistrust was greatly heightened by the very decided attitude of hostility to which he had committed himself against Captain Coles's plans, and by the difficulty which that officer encountered in his endeavours to get them fairly carried out. But this is all now a matter of history, and we have no desire to revert to the subject beyond what is necessary for the purpose of this sketch of the history of our ironclad fleet. And before going any farther we must do Mr Reed, and the Board of Admiralty who appointed him, the justice to say, that, judging now by the results of his seven years' work, he has justified their selection of him for that important post, and that to his skill and ability the country is largely indebted for the most powerful armoured fleet afloat. The practical experience wanting to Mr Reed at the outset of his official career he has since thoroughly gained; and though some failures attended his earlier designs, they were almost unavoidable at the commencement of an entirely new system of ship-building.

The principal changes that have taken place in the construction of broadside ironclads since the Warrior was built may be best described in Mr Reed's own words:—

"The Warrior was armoured at the middle only; both bow and stern, and consequently the rudder-head and steering-gear were exposed to shot within thin iron sides; in later ships, in all which have been recently de-

signed, this central or 'box' battery has been associated with a continuous belt of armour extending from stem to stern, and protecting the region of the water-line and the steering-gear, the counter of the ship being carried down below the water in order to further screen the rudder-head. This last improvement, like many others, is wholly due, to the Controller of the Navy, Sir Spencer Robinson.

"The Warrior's armour was of uniform thickness over the whole of the protected broadside. In recent ships, over the most vital parts, such as the region of the water-line and in wake of the fighting-decks, the armour is thicker than on the less important parts; and in some ships increased protection has been given to the region of the water-line by additional teak backing and iron bulkheads fitted inside.

"The Warrior possessed only broadside-fire from her battery-guns; all the later vessels have had their broadside-fire supplemented by bow-fire and stern-fire of greater or less extent.

"The Warrior had only a main-deck battery armour-plated; recent ships have had a protected upper-deck battery given to them.

"The Warrior was designed to carry a considerable number of guns in an outspread battery; later ships have been built to carry a concentrated battery of very much heavier guns.

"The Warrior and Minotaur classes were made extremely long, with a view to speed; recent ships have been made very much shorter in proportion.

"The Warrior was designed with V-formed transverse sections for a great length at the bow; later ships have been formed with sections of a U-shape."

A reference to the table on the next page will show the thickness of armour and backing carried by our ironclad ships, as well as other particulars respecting them. By this it will be seen that we have arrived at 9 inches of armour on the sides of broadside ships, and 12 inches on the monitor vessels, while the turrets of the latter will have 14 inches of armour-plating on them. And Mr Reed tells us that "the Admiralty have long been in possession of a design for a turret-ship with sides plated with 15-inch armour, and turrets with 18-inch armour." Also, that he has

THE IRONCLADS OF THE BRITISH NAVY.

NAME.	Length, feet.	Tonnage.	Nominal Horse- Power.	No. of Guns.	Thickness of	
					Armour, inches.	Backing, inches.
<i>Iron-built Broadside-Ships.</i>						
Warrior, . . .	380	6109	1250	32	4½	18
Black Prince, . .	380	6109	1250	28	4½	18
Achilles, . . .	380	6121	1250	26	4½	18
Defence, . . .	280	3720	600	16	4½	18
Resistance, . . .	280	3710	600	16	4½	18
Hector, . . .	280	4089	800	18	4½	18
Valiant, . . .	280	4063	800	18	4½	18
Minotaur, . . .	400	6621	1350	26	5½	9
Agincourt, . . .	400	6621	1350	28	5½	9
Northumberland, .	400	6621	1350	28	5½	9
*Bellerophon, . .	300	4270	1000	15	6	10
*Penelope, . . .	260	3096	600	11	5 to 6	10
*Hercules, . . .	325	5234	1200	14	6 to 9	10 to 12
*Sultan, . . .	325	5226	1200	12	6 to 9	10 to 12
*Invincible, . . .	280	3774	800	14	6 to 8	10
*Audacious, . . .	280	3774	800	14	6 to 8	10
*Iron Duke, . . .	280	3774	800	14	6 to 8	10
*Vanguard, . . .	280	3774	800	14	6 to 8	10
*Swiftsure, . . .	280	3893	800	14	6 to 8	10
*Triumph, . . .	280	3893	800	14	6 to 8	10
<i>Wood-built Broadside-Ships.</i>						
Caledonia, . . .	273	4125	1000	24	4½	
Ocean, . . .	273	4047	1000	24	4½	
Prince Consort, . .	273	4045	1000	24	4½	
Royal Oak, . . .	273	4056	800	24	4½	
Royal Alfred, . . .	273	4068	800	18	6	
Zealous, . . .	252	3716	800	20	4½	
Repulse, . . .	252	3749	800	12	6	
*Lord Clyde, . . .	280	4067	1000	24	4½	
*Lord Warden, . .	280	4060	1000	18	4½	
<i>Wood-built Corvettes.</i>						
Research, . . .	195	1253	200	4	4½	
Favourite, . . .	225	2094	400	10	4½	
Enterprise, . . .	180	993	160	4	4½	
*Pallas, . . .	225	2372	600	6	4½	
<i>Iron-built Turret-Vessels.</i>						
Prince Albert, . .	240	2537	500	4	4½	18
Scorpion, . . .	224	1833	350	4	4½	9
Wivern, . . .	224	1899	350	4	4½	9
*Monarch, . . .	330	5102	1100	7	6 to 7	12
Captain, . . .	320	4272	900	6	6 to 8	12
*Hotspur, . . .	235	2637	600	2	8 to 11	12
*Rupert, . . .	250	3159	700	3	9 to 12	12
*Glatton, . . .	245	2709	600	2	10 to 12	18
*Devastation, . .	285	4406	800	4	10 to 12	18
*Thunderer, . . .	285	4406	800	4	10 to 12	18
*Fury, . . .		5000	1000	4		
<i>Wood-built Turret-Vessel.</i>						
Royal Sovereign, .	240	3765	800	5	5½	
<i>Iron-built Gunboats.</i>						
*Viper, . . .	160	737	160	2	4½	10
*Vixen, . . .	160	754	160	2	4½	10
*Waterwitch, . .	162	777	160	2	4½	10

Only partially armoured.

Building.

These vessels have also an inner skin-plating of 1½ inch or 1¼ inch thick behind the teak backing, except Penelope, which has ¾ inch.

Converted line-of-battle ships.

Converted vessels.

The "Birkenhead rams" purchased by Government.

Mr Reed's sea-going turret-ship.

Captain Coles's do.

Building.

Monitor rams.

Building.

Monitor for coast service.

Building.

Monitors for distant service.

Ordered.

These vessels have also an inner skin-plating of 1½ inch or 1¼ inch thick behind the teak backing.

Converted three-decker.

Hydraulic propeller.

Only partially armoured.

Building.

Building.

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Building.

These vessels have also an inner skin-plating of 1½ inch or 1¼ inch thick behind the teak backing, except Penelope, which has ¾ inch.

Converted line-of-battle ships.

1½-inch inner skin-plating.

Converted vessels.

The "Birkenhead rams" purchased by Government.
Mr Reed's sea-going turret-ship.
Captain Coles's do.
Monitor
Building. } rams.
Building. } Monitor for coast service.
Building. } Monitors for distant service.
Ordered. } service.

These vessels have also an inner skin-plating of 1½ inch or 1¼ inch thick behind the teak backing.

Converted three-decker.

Hydraulic propeller.

* Built or building from Mr Reed's designs.

NOTE.—The turret-vessels have thicker armour on their turrets.

The above vessels are arranged in their several classes as nearly as possible in the order in which they were built or converted.

"prepared outline designs, not on extravagant dimensions, to carry 20-inch armour both on broadsides and on turrets." In order to give some idea of what strength of resistance to shot the above thicknesses of armour indicate, we may mention here that the Armour Plate Committee have formed the conclusion that the resisting power of iron plates varies approximately as the square of the thickness; and upon this assumption, if we take the resisting power of the Warrior's armour at 20, that of the Hercules would be 81, the Hotspur, ram-vessel, 121, the sides of the Devastation, monitor, recently laid down at Portsmouth, 144, and her turrets 196. But it must be observed that these figures do not adequately express the difference between the older and the later ironclads, since all the vessels lately built have an inner skin of iron-plating in addition, behind the wooden backing of the armour-plate, varying from $1\frac{1}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch in thickness; while the "bracket-frame" system of construction adopted by Mr Reed still further strengthens the side of the vessel.

But with the thickness of armour has increased the power of artillery. The battle of the guns and armour-plates has been obstinately contested on both sides, and is still raging with violence. The Warrior's original armament consisted of 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ -ton smooth-bore 68-pounders, with a charge of 16 lb., which were the heaviest guns carried in our navy up to that time. We have advanced from that to 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ -ton, 9-ton, and 12-ton guns; and the Hercules actually carries 18-ton rifled guns in her broadside-ports, throwing 400-lb. shot with 60-lb. charges; while the Monarch and Captain are armed with 25-ton 600-pounders in their turrets, and the new monitor vessels are to have 30-ton guns throwing 600-lb. projectiles with a charge of 100 lb. of powder. But even this is not all; for while Mr Reed gives us a hint of the possible

advance to 20 inches of armour, from Woolwich arsenal we hear rumours of 50-ton 1000-pounders to be forthcoming by-and-by; and it is said that the Russians even now are in possession of such a gun. It is necessary to point out here that the number of guns in the accompanying table is not a sure indication of the fighting powers of the different ships, for the later vessels carry much heavier guns, though fewer of them, than the earlier ships. For instance, the 28 guns of the Agincourt represent four 12-ton 250-pounders, and twenty-four 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ -ton 115-pounders; while the 14 guns of the Hercules include eight 18-ton 400-pounders, two 12-ton guns, and four 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ -ton chase-guns. Now, seeing that the twenty-four lighter guns of the Agincourt's armament would be quite harmless when opposed to armour that the heavier guns would succeed in penetrating, the great superiority of the offensive power of the Hercules, with only half the number of guns, is manifest.

Before going further into our subject, it may be well to compare the French and American ironclads with our own, in order to see how we stand relatively to other countries. The First Lord of the Admiralty, in his speech introducing the navy estimates, informed the House of Commons that France has 33 sea-going broadside-ships, and 2 turret-vessels built or building, besides 5 small rams—total, 40; not including floating batteries. Our fleet, it will be seen from the table, consists of 29 heavy broadside-ships, 12 turret-vessels, 4 corvettes, and 3 gunboats—total, 48; also not including floating batteries. So that in numbers we are not far superior, but in the strength and power of the ships we are much more so. Mr Reed tells us—and his sources of information are unexceptionable—that the French broadside-ships of a class corresponding to our Invincible carry armour of 7.8 inches at the water-

line, decreasing to 6.2 inches and 4 inches on other parts; and that their rams of the *Bélier* class have 8.2-inch and 7-inch armour, "the strongest carried by any French vessel yet built." Most of the French ships are built of wood, and have no inner skin of iron-plating, which we have now universally adopted, since experiment has shown that it adds greatly to the strength of the side, as well as to protection against splinters. In the matter of armament, the French ships carry guns of $7\frac{1}{2}$ tons, $13\frac{1}{2}$ tons, and $21\frac{1}{2}$ tons; corresponding very nearly to our 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ -ton, 12-ton, and 18-ton guns. But the French guns are breech-loaders, with all the defects of that system, which we have found necessary to abandon entirely for heavy ordnance; and there seems good reason to suppose that our muzzle-loading rifled guns are far superior to the weapons of our neighbours, although from their reticence on these matters our information is but limited.

The backward condition of the iron manufacture of the United States places the American navy at a great disadvantage with respect to ironclads. Nearly all their vessels are plated with laminated armour, which is far inferior to solid iron of a similar thickness. In experiments on this point, the Armour Plate Committee reported that "laminated armour is considerably weaker than solid armour;" also, that "a 4-inch solid plate would have effectually stopped all the projectiles, whereas they easily penetrated 6 inches of laminated plates." A few of their ships have solid armour, but none exceeding $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches thick. The drawings in Mr Reed's book, representing sections of the sides of various types of ironclads, exhibit at a glance the contrast between the solid slabs of iron on the sides of our ships and the built-up laminated armour of the American monitors; and the inferiority of the structural arrangements of the

latter are also strikingly evident. As regards guns, the Americans are as far behind us and the French as in armour-plating. They have clung with tenacity to the old system of cast-iron smooth-bore ordnance; which, however, they construct of immense size, throwing enormous but weak projectiles at a low velocity. The effect of this system is, that the huge cast-iron shot have but little penetrating power, though the concussion of one of them weighing nearly half a ton is very great; and it may be a question whether greater damage might not be inflicted upon the frame of an ironclad by heavy thumping blows from such projectiles than from a smaller shot of greater penetrating power. But as regards range, and capability of using shells with heavy bursting charges, the American guns are very inferior; and general opinion—including the United States Ordnance Committee themselves—is strongly against their system. But we have better authority than even Mr Reed for the inferiority of the American navy in respect of ironclad ships and guns. The report of the Secretary of the Navy, published in our newspapers a few months ago, was a most humiliating confession of weakness and deficiency. With but few exceptions the American ironclads are vessels which were constructed to meet the exigencies of their civil war, run up in haste, weakly built, and still more weakly armoured. It must be remembered that the Confederate ports were closely blockaded, that they had not a ship at sea, nor the means of building a sea-going ironclad; and that therefore the only fighting possible was in their harbours, creeks, and rivers. Seaworthiness was consequently not a very essential qualification for the monitors of the Federal navy, and so they were planned accordingly. No doubt these vessels are still useful for harbour defence, but we may be quite certain that the fighting

powers of the greater part of them will never be tested at sea. The sea-going ironclad fleet of the United States has yet to be built.

The question of wood or iron for the construction of armoured ships has now passed the stage of argument and discussion. Iron has so many important advantages over wood for that purpose, that in this country the latter has been entirely given up for ironclad shipbuilding. Of the fourteen wood-built ironclads in our navy, only three—the *Pallas*, *Lord Clyde*, and *Lord Warden*—were originally laid down as such; the others being converted while on the stocks in process of construction as unarmoured vessels. And these three, Mr Reed tells us, were built solely in order to utilise the store of timber lying in the dockyards. It is therefore unnecessary to go into the various arguments for and against the two systems, more especially as this has been done previously in these columns; it is sufficient to indicate the two points in which the superiority of iron chiefly consists. In the first place, an iron-built ship admits of much greater strength, combined with a less corresponding weight, than a wooden hull of the same capacity; therefore the weight saved in this respect may be applied to a greater thickness of armour, heavier guns, more powerful machinery, or in any way desirable. Or, as Mr Reed puts it, if the two ships carry the same weights, the size of the iron-built ship might be reduced by just that number of tons. Next, building with iron admits of the hull being divided into watertight compartments, and of being constructed upon the cellular principle, by which the bottom of the vessel is doubled throughout—a skin within a skin—the intervening space being crossed by numerous longitudinal and transverse girders, which give support to both the iron skins, and also strengthen the structure as a whole. This system of building, which was only par-

tially adopted in the earliest ships, has been fully developed in the later vessels: it affords very much greater security against the attack of a ram, a shot striking below the armour, or the effects of running upon a rock. We may add that iron-built vessels are more durable, and are easier of repair. The strongest objection to them at present is the extreme liability of the bottom to fouling, from the growth of weed, rendering frequent docking necessary; but it is impossible to doubt that in this scientific age some efficacious method will be discovered to prevent such a serious defect; and in fact some of the later anti-fouling compositions have succeeded very well. Further experiments for the protection of the iron bottom from fouling are about to be tried in some of the ships of the *Invincible* class; the *Swiftsure* and *Triumph* are to have a thin wooden planking over their bottom, with the ordinary copper sheathing over that; and the *Audacious* is, we believe, sheathed with zinc directly over the iron.

In contrasting the more recent with the earlier ironclads, one of Mr Reed's strong points is the improved structural arrangements of his ships, which, combined with an altered form of body, has resulted in greatly decreasing the actual weight of the hull in comparison with the amount of weight carried by it, while at the same time increasing its strength. This result, which would almost seem paradoxical, has been attained by the introduction of the "bracket-frame" system of building—to explain which would involve much technicality—and by the adoption of the U-form for the transverse sections of the bow, instead of that of a V-shape, as mentioned above. One of the tables, with which the book before us is so well supplied, shows that the hull of the *Black Prince*, sister ship to the *Warrior*, weighs 4969 tons; and the total of weights carried by it (including armour,

armament, machinery, coals, and equipment) is 4281 tons. In the *Defence*, another of the earliest ships, the hull weighs 3500 tons; weights carried, 2492 tons. The *Bellerophon*, one of Mr Reed's first vessels, has a weight of hull of 3652 tons, to 3798 tons of weight carried; the *Monarch* turret-ship has a hull of 3674 tons, and carries 4632 tons; and the *Audacious* has 2675 tons' weight of hull, to 3224 tons carried. But we must let Mr Reed sing the praises of his own ships here:—

"Another very striking instance of the progress made since iron hulls came into vogue for ironclad ships is afforded by the comparison of the *Defence* with the *Audacious*. The total weight of these ships and their lading is very nearly the same—the *Defence* weighing 5992 tons, and the *Audacious* 5899 tons, when fully equipped. In the *Defence*, however, the hull exceeds the weights carried by 1000 tons; while in the *Audacious* the hull is less than the weights carried by 550 tons. The difference in favour of the carrying power of the *Audacious* amounts to 730 tons, although she is specially strengthened and constructed on the bracket-frame system, while the *Defence* is built after the *Warrior* pattern. Perhaps the real magnitude of this saving will be better appreciated if I state that if the *Defence* had been built on the system of the *Audacious*, and the armoured surface had remained the same, while in all other particulars the ship had been completed as she now stands, the saving in weight of hull would have been sufficient to have more than doubled the thickness of armour throughout. As it is, we find the *Audacious* carrying 8-inch and 6-inch armour instead of the 4½-inch armour of the *Defence*, having a total weight of armour and backing exceeding that carried by the *Defence* by 210 tons, and carrying besides 520 tons greater weight of armament, machinery, coals, and equipment. All these advantages have been gained in this case, be it remembered, in a ship of comparatively small size, the *Audacious* being of 2847 tons less tonnage than the *Minotaur*."

This result is certainly most creditable to Mr Reed, and he may be pardoned the exultation he exhibits regarding it.

But there is another and even

more important advantage of the more recently built ships, in their moderate length. The extreme length of the *Warrior* and *Minotaur* classes renders them very unhandy ships for manœuvring purposes, and is inconvenient in other respects. One of the most important requisites for a fighting ship is handiness; and the value of quick-turning vessels will be clearly exhibited in the next general action at sea, whenever it may take place. In the days of sailing-vessels, there was not room for so much difference between ships in this respect as at present, and the conditions of wind and weather imposed absolute limits upon the choice of positions that hostile ships could take up with respect to each other, as well as upon the manœuvres which they could execute. But now that a ship under steam can, in any weather in which it is possible to fight her guns, take up any position she chooses, and change that position in any way she pleases, independently of the direction of the wind; and seeing that every ship has some weak point—some one direction in which she can bring the fewest guns to bear, or exposes some ill-protected part of her hull, and which the enemy would probably select for his point of attack,—it follows that, with equal offensive and defensive powers, the more handy ship would have a great advantage over her antagonist. The superiority of short vessels in this respect has been so fully acknowledged on all sides, and is in fact so self-evident, that we need not enlarge upon this point. The Admiralty have thoroughly recognised the principle, and no ship laid down since the *Minotaur* class has exceeded 330 feet in length, or 70 feet shorter than those vessels; while the greater part of Mr Reed's ships do not exceed 280 feet long, or 100 feet shorter than the *Warrior*.

"The actual introduction of this improvement," says Mr Reed, "is due much more to Sir Spencer Robinson,

the Controller of the Navy, than to any other person; and the foresight and persistency with which he carried this change through will never be more fully appreciated than in the hour of action, should that unhappily arrive."

In truth, it is to this talented and accomplished officer that the country is mainly indebted for the many improvements in our ships during the last few years, and it is creditable to Mr Reed that he is ready to acknowledge the advantage which he has derived from serving under so able a chief.

It may naturally be concluded that the decreased length of our ships has lessened their expense; and in fact the later-built ironclads have cost much less than the earlier ones. Mr Reed takes credit, and justly so, for the comparative cheapness of his vessels; but on this point there is something to be considered. Iron shipbuilding had never been practised in the Royal dockyards till the Achilles was laid down at Chatham in 1861. It was therefore an entirely new description of work for the dockyard people; and naturally the first ships constructed by them on this principle would cost more than those following, when the men had become more accustomed to the work, and the system had got into regular order. But the difference is, after all, not really so great as the figures in Mr Reed's book might lead one to suppose. For instance, the Achilles cost, in actual outlay on labour and materials, £470,330, and the Bellerophon, built immediately after in the same yard, and, we believe, in the same dock, cost £364,327. But the Achilles is 380 feet long, and the Bellerophon only 300; therefore the Achilles cost £1238 per foot of length, and the Bellerophon £1214—an inappreciable difference. Or, taking the tonnage of the two ships, that of the Achilles being 6121, and the Bellerophon 4270, the former vessel cost £77 a-ton, the latter £85, the balance in this case being

against Mr Reed's ship. But as the Bellerophon is of a more complicated construction, and carries heavier armour than the Achilles, the outlay upon her would consequently be greater in proportion, which would account for this difference.

Nothing is so striking, at first sight, in considering this reconstruction of the navy, as the small amount of the actual cost of the ships when compared with the total sums voted annually by Parliament for the Navy Estimates. We are told by Mr Reed that our new ironclad fleet, which was commenced in May 1859, cost, in round numbers, ten millions sterling up to January 1869, or about a million a-year. In these ten years the total amount voted by Parliament was £116,800,000.

"Out of this 116 millions sterling, 10 millions only have, as we have seen, been expended upon the building and equipment of new ironclads, the remaining 106 millions having been expended upon other objects. It is desirable that this fact should be better understood than it is at present. There are many influential persons who seem to think that it is upon new ironclad ships that millions have been annually spent of late years, whereas, in point of fact, one million per year, or less than *one-eleventh* of our outlay on the navy, is all that has been expended in this way; and I venture to say that it would be very difficult to prove either that our present magnificent and powerful ironclad fleet has been dearly purchased at 10 millions, or that any other 10 millions of the 116 have secured for the country a more valuable result."

There is, after all, nothing surprising or unreasonable in this. If the accounts of any of the large railway companies were examined, the cost of new rolling-stock would be found to bear but a small proportion to the total outlay; and so also with respect to the great steamship companies, whose expenditure on new vessels is but small when compared with the whole amount exhibited on the balance-sheet.

We must remember that our naval establishments require to be maintained upon such a scale, as that they shall be capable of enduring an immense strain, in the event of any sudden and unforeseen emergency arising, without the probability of their breaking down at a critical moment. It is this that excites such distrust with regard to the sweeping reductions which have been taking place. It is not only a question as to whether, in peace time, we cannot do with a few ships less in commission, with a smaller number of officers, dockyard officials, and admiralty clerks, and with magazines of stores reduced to a minimum. The question to consider is, whether we shall be in a condition to send a powerful fleet to sea at short notice, to bring forward rapidly a second fleet to support it, and to repair and refit our ships in the shortest possible time as they come in disabled. This is a very grave consideration for England; and beside it the showy triumphs of a surplus budget would, if the hour of danger should arrive, prove illusory phantoms.

When we come to consider the speed of our ironclads, we touch one of the weak points of the short ships, notwithstanding Mr Reed's protestations to the contrary, with whom we find ourselves at direct issue here. He says:—

"I am warranted in making the assertion that in armoured ships, as the extent and thickness of the armour to be carried are increased, the proportion of length to breadth should be diminished, and the fulness of the water-lines increased; and that the shorter, fuller ship can be propelled at as great a speed as the longer, finer ship, with about the same, or only a little greater, horse-power."

To the first part of this proposition we have nothing to object; but to the latter we take leave to demur entirely, and to advance instead, that "*the shorter, fuller ship can only be propelled at as great a speed as the longer, finer ship, by a very*

considerable addition to her horse-power, and by sacrificing a portion of her coal-stowage." And this we propose to show by Mr Reed's own figures and statements, though it is such an evident truism as to be hardly worth the arguing.

"The old type of marine engine, with which our wooden ships and the earlier ironclads were supplied, was capable of developing from four to five times the nominal power, and the total weight of engines and boilers but little exceeded three-quarters of a ton per nominal horse-power. It had been gradually improved during a long course of years, and had been brought to such perfection that the guaranteed power was often exceeded on the measured-mile trial. The great drawback, however, to its many excellences was its large consumption of fuel; and, in consequence of this, the new type of engine, with surface condensers, superheaters, and other contrivances for economising fuel, was introduced. This type is capable of developing from six to seven times the nominal power, and the total weight of engines and boilers about equals one ton per nominal horse-power. The weight of the new engines is thus considerably greater per nominal horse-power than the old, but the developed power is also greater, and, as I shall show hereafter, they are far more economical of fuel."

Therefore it is manifest that, if the longer vessels were supplied with the same improved machinery, they would steam just so much faster, inasmuch as a greater power would be developed; while, at the same time, their supply of coal would last longer than it now does, from the economy resulting from the improved engines. No doubt there is some limit to the proportion of length to breadth beyond which the extra speed would be swallowed up by the increased frictional resistance of the sides of the vessel; but the limits imposed by the conditions of seaworthiness are certainly within this, and therefore it is that we find that the fastest vessels are always the longest in proportion to their power. Mr Reed shows us how dearly bought are the last two knots of speed in

fast ships; that, in fact, "it may be taken as roughly correct to say that, to increase a speed of, say, nearly 12 knots to over 14 knots, it will be necessary to nearly *double* the power—in some cases to quite double it." For instance, the *Minotaur* at 11.84 knots was working at 3497 indicated H.-P., but at 14.33 knots the H.-P. developed was 6949, or very nearly double for the 2.49 knots increase of speed. The engines of the *Hercules*, steaming at 12.12 knots, developed 4045 indicated H.-P., while at 14.69 knots they worked up to 8529 H.-P., or considerably more than double for the extra 2.57 knots. Here we see that the shorter vessel required a much greater proportional increase of power to obtain the additional $2\frac{1}{2}$ knots than the long one; and the higher the rate of speed the greater sacrifice of power is necessary for each additional knot. Applying, then, this principle, we shall find that it is by no means a slight addition to the engine-power that is required to bring the speed of a short ship up to that of a long one. The *Warrior*, of 380 feet long and 1250 nominal H.-P., has a speed of 14.3 knots; the *Hercules*, 55 feet shorter and 1200 H.-P., is $\frac{1}{15}$ of a knot faster. Now the *Hercules* is fitted with all the latest improvements of machinery mentioned above, and her engines and boilers weigh 1206 tons to the *Warrior's* 920. At the same time, the *Hercules's* engines work up to 8529 indicated H.-P., or more than seven times the nominal power; while those of the *Warrior* develop less than five times their nominal power, or little more than two-thirds of the indicated H.-P. of the *Hercules*. Now, let us imagine the two ships to have changed their machinery, and what would be the result? The speed of the *Hercules* would be reduced to about $13\frac{1}{2}$ knots, while that of the *Warrior* would exceed 15 knots. Or give the *Warrior* machinery similar to that of the *Hercules*, and her speed would ex-

ceed that of the latter vessel by half a knot, instead of being nearly half a knot less.

With respect to the stowage of coal, similar reasoning applies. Mr Reed gives a table showing the distances various ships can steam at different speeds before their coal is exhausted. Of the six ships mentioned, the *Monarch* stands first in this respect, then *Warrior*, *Hercules*, *Bellerophon*, *Achilles*, *Minotaur*, in order of merit; thus, with the exception of *Warrior*, showing a superiority in favour of the shorter ships. Now, let us again compare the *Hercules* and *Warrior*. The former vessel carries 600 tons of coal, which, at a speed of 11 knots, will cover a distance of 2030 miles. The *Warrior* carries 800 tons, and can steam at the same speed 2100 miles. But the machinery of the *Hercules* weighs, as we have seen, 286 tons more than the *Warrior's*. If we then imagine the *Warrior* to be fitted with similar machinery, her stowage of coal must, to maintain the same line of flotation, be reduced to 514 tons, or 86 tons less than the *Hercules*; but her speed will have become so greatly increased, and her boilers so much more economical, that she would be able to steam almost if not quite as great a distance as before, but certainly as far as the other ship. But the improvements of machinery above mentioned, though they increase the weight considerably, do not materially affect the space occupied—indeed the boilers occupy less space—and therefore the *Warrior* would still be able to carry her 800 tons of coal, with but a slight increase to her draught of water. Thus then we find that, with similar machinery, the long ship not only steams half a knot faster at full speed than the short one, but carries coal enough to take her a distance of at least half as far again as the other. And here it must be remarked that we have chosen one of Mr Reed's largest ships as an example for our reasoning; were

we to take a shorter vessel she would contrast still more unfavourably in these respects.

The above is so self-evident a proposition that it would be a waste of argument to maintain it, were it not that Mr Reed has endeavoured to persuade the public that short ships may be made to go as fast as long ones, and at the same time carry as much or more coal—which is a simple impossibility. Inventors are proverbially enthusiasts. The mind, from dwelling so long and anxiously upon the work of its creation, becomes totally insensible to its imperfections, and can perceive nothing but faultless excellence. Like a fond mother, who is as blind to the failings of her own darlings as she is slow to acknowledge attractions in any others, so Mr Reed, not content with the many good points which his ships really possess, insists that they have no faults whatever, and that they combine even those qualities which are irreconcilable. He says again:—

“It must be obvious that, if a ship 300 feet long, plated all over with given armour, carrying a given armament, and costing, say £300,000, steams at a given speed with a given power, it would be a mere waste of money and a sacrifice of handiness to build her 400 feet long, at a cost, say, of £380,000, for no other object than that of driving the greater weight at the same speed with about the same power.”

To this we would reply:—“Certainly, if there were no other object to be attained by it; but since the increased coal-stowage, gained by the greater length, would enable the greater weight to be driven at the same speed with about the same power for a *much greater distance or a much longer time*, there is clearly another object—and a very important one—to be gained, which must not be ignored.”

From what has been said previously, it will not be supposed that we are advocating a return to long ships; we merely desire to point out what Mr Reed strives to

conceal, that short ships have their failings as well as their merits. The fact is—and no one knows it better than Mr Reed himself, notwithstanding his book—it is impossible to combine in any vessel, to a maximum extent, all the qualities which are desirable for a war-ship. We want to carry heavy guns, capable of being fired in any direction, and armour of sufficient thickness to resist equally heavy artillery; we want a high rate of speed, and great capacity for stowage of fuel; we want our ship to be of moderate length, so as to be quick and handy in manœuvring; she must not draw too much water; she must have sufficient sail-power to be able to dispense with steam when it is not specially required; she must also have a steady gun-platform, or, in other words, must not roll; and she must carry her guns sufficiently high out of the water. Every shipbuilder and every sailor knows that it is quite impossible to get all these desirable qualities in one vessel. Some of them may be obtained to a high degree, but only by a sacrifice of others, and therefore every ironclad—and indeed we may say every vessel of whatever description—is a compromise of some sort. That our later and shorter ironclads do compare favourably with the long ones in combining a high speed with a fair stowage of coal, is due, as we have seen, solely to the circumstance of the engine-makers having devised means of developing a greater power with a smaller expense of fuel; and of this improvement having come about just in time for Mr Reed to take advantage of it for his vessels. Without this improvement of machinery, the short ships must either have been considerably slower than the long ones, or would have carried a very small quantity of coal.

The question of the most desirable speed for our ironclads is a matter for much consideration, and is open to argument on the point

of how far capacity for coal-stowage should be given up to increased engine-power. It is, we venture to say, too much taken for granted that great speed is necessary above all other things for these vessels. It must be remembered that the ironclads are our present line-of-battle ships; and that the capability of keeping the sea for a lengthened period, without being compelled to go into port to coal, would probably in war-time prove to be even a more important qualification for such vessels than great speed. Experience has shown that when a squadron of ironclads are cruising together, it is necessary that the steam should always be ready for use; since these ponderous vessels are not sufficiently manageable under sail alone to be depended upon for manœuvring and keeping proper station. And when cruising off and blockading an enemy's port, or even when at anchor in the vicinity, it will certainly be requisite to keep the fires constantly alight, in order to be ready for an attack at any moment. Now, speed is synonymous with horse-power, which means consumption of fuel, and this implies space which is fixed within arbitrary limits; and so long as coal continues to be the fuel used, these limits are of no great extent. A reduction of the power of the engines gives smaller boilers and more space for coal, and the result is twofold, since the consumption of coal is diminished while the quantity carried is increased. Hence we see that for one of the purposes which our ironclads would probably be called upon to fulfil in war-time—that of a blockading squadron—speed would be a secondary qualification to stowage of coal. We do not mean to say that some very fast ships would not be required; on the contrary, even a squadron such as we have supposed ought to have some such vessels attached to it; but for the main body of the fleet, which is to be considered as the line-

of-battle, the experience of future naval wars will probably show that great speed is not so desirable as to be able to keep the sea for a lengthened period. It is with ships as with horses, we cannot combine the swiftness of the English racer with the endurance of the Arab; each have their good qualities and each is useful for different purposes.

We have scarcely perhaps yet realised the peculiarly *accidental* character which future naval warfare will probably acquire. Past experience shows us how the best-laid plans and calculations of our ablest admirals were liable to be frustrated by the chances of wind, weather, and tide; and it is frequently taken for granted that, as the steam-power of modern fleets enables these considerations to be in a great measure set aside, combinations will be formed and manœuvres planned with the greatest certainty of accomplishment. But the truth is, there are many elements of uncertainty in such complicated machines as our present war-ships, which the old sailing fleets were free from. Bottoms will get foul, coal will become exhausted, engines will break down, valves will get out of order, boilers will leak—all these are accidents to which steam-ships are liable at any time; and, besides these, there will be the chances of irreparable damage from battle or torpedo explosions. For one of the contrasts between past and future naval wars will be the terrible injury that ships will inflict upon one another with the destructive modern weapons. In Nelson's time, unless a ship were dismasted, it was frequently unnecessary even to make for an anchorage after a battle—the damages could generally be repaired at sea; but this will now be out of the question; for if an action between two ironclads with heavy guns be only moderately well contested, the chances are ten to one that, if the ships survive the conflict—that is, continue to float—

they will both have to go into port for repairs to make them seaworthy.

The tentative progress of our ironclad shipbuilding—the consequence partly of the rapid advance in guns and armour-plating, and also of the entire novelty of the system, with the want of previous experience as a guide—has produced a great diversity of type in our armoured fleet. Leaving out the rams and the smaller vessels, and taking only those that may be looked upon as ships of the line, there are some seven or eight distinct classes, differing greatly in some of the characteristics of dimensions, armour, armament, speed, handiness, and rig. That this want of uniformity could have been avoided, without retarding the advance which has been made in the qualities of our ships, we do not believe; and we quite agree with Mr Reed that “variety of design resulting from progressive improvements is to be preferred to a non-progressive uniformity.” But a nearer approach to uniformity than exists at present is not the less desirable when a satisfactory type of ship is obtained. The difficulties of manœuvring a fleet in action will be great enough as it is, from the smoke of fifty funnels and monster guns, without the additional perplexities of vessels of very different speeds and turning powers. We cannot therefore agree with Mr Reed when he considers this diversity of type rather advantageous than otherwise.

The invention of the balanced rudder is another circumstance which has given an adventitious superiority to our later ironclads in respect to quickness of turning; and Mr Reed has not been slow to take advantage of it for his ships. The merits of this invention are, that it enables a greater rudder-surface to be applied, while, at the same time, it allows the helm to be put further over than was possible with the common rudder when going

at full speed in a powerful ship. This has produced a great effect in improving the turning qualities of ships under steam; and as it has only been introduced in the later ships, it has given the shorter vessels another great superiority over the long ones, quite beyond the merits of the ships themselves. And when Mr Reed vaunts the extraordinary handiness of the *Hercules*, compared with the *Warrior* and *Minotaur*, it must be remembered that the former ship has this new style of rudder, which the others have not. It would appear, however, that although the balanced rudder answers well for steaming, there is some doubt yet as to its efficacy for sailing only. During the cruise of the Admiralty last autumn, when the squadron fell in with a gale of wind off Cape Finisterre, the captains of the *Monarch* and *Hercules* reported that they had the greatest difficulty in steering their ships. In the *Monarch*, “running before it with no after-sail, it was found almost impossible to keep the ship from broaching-to;” and Lord Gilford, commanding the *Hercules*, reports:—“I regret to say she is a most difficult ship to steer under all circumstances” (*under sail?*), “from the large weather-helm she carries, without a speed of four to five knots, more especially running before the wind. When the gale commenced, she steered so wildly, and broached to so often, that I gave up the idea of running out the gale, and hove-to with fore and main trysails and fore-staysail, using steam with about twenty revolutions.” But it must be mentioned here that, with the exception of these steering difficulties, both ships behaved admirably during the gale, proving themselves such excellent sea-boats that they could have been at any time taken into action with confidence. The Controller of the Navy believes that, with some alteration and further experience in the use of

this rudder, the difficulty of steering will be overcome.

The introduction of the double-screw principle has also greatly improved the efficiency of our ships for manœuvring purposes, more particularly ram-vessels. Not only has it much increased their capabilities for turning quickly and in a small space, but it has lessened the chance of a ship being disabled, whether by accident to the machinery, or the screw becoming fouled, since the vessel can be propelled and manœuvred by one screw only, in the event of the other being crippled. The *Penelope*, and some of the ships of the *Invincible* class, also the *Captain*, and the monitor vessels now building, are fitted, or being fitted, on this principle.

One of the much-debated points in connection with ironclads, and especially turret-ships, is the question of masts and sails. There are not wanting those who would see our armoured fleet steam-hulks and nothing more; but practical men, seamen particularly, are all of accord that sail-power is still necessary even for our ironclads—called upon as they may be to operate in any quarter of the globe. The three latest monitor vessels ordered—the *Devastation*, *Thunderer*, and *Fury*—are however to have no masts; but they have been designed with the view of carrying a very large quantity of coal, 1700 tons, and they will not have a high speed. They are not intended for cruising purposes, but to be able, if required, to steam across the Atlantic without coaling; and they are meant for special and not general service. We have not, however, yet arrived at a suitable rig for our ironclads. The traditions of the service require that our new ships of the line, though strangely metamorphosed, shall yet retain something of the former days; and so “shift top-sail-yards” and “strike topmasts” must still be practicable drills, though the necessity for them—the

being able to replace a spar quickly when in chase, or being chased—has long ceased to exist. And the eyes of our gallant tars must still be gladdened by the sight of a cloud of studding-sails and other “flying kites,” though the mind acknowledges that when the day of battle arrives they will be anathematised as so much mischievous lumber. Though a certain amount of sail-power is, and always will be, necessary to steady a ship in a sea-way, and render her manageable in case of accident to the machinery, yet a redundancy of top-hamper is very objectionable. Not only is the deck encumbered with a number of spare spars, and the space below—never too great—largely taken up with a multiplicity of sails and gear of all sorts, but every rope above the gunwale is a trap to catch the screw when a mast is shot away; and therefore the simpler the rig, and the fewer the ropes, the better. Much has to be done in this respect before our ironclads can be considered properly efficient for fighting purposes; and if a war was to break out now, it would not be long before their rig was altered to something more suitable.

We have hitherto chiefly confined our attention to broadside-ships, but we come now to the turret system; and here we are met, at the very outset of our remarks, by the reflection, that although this ingenious design has been before the public for ten years, having been laid before the Admiralty some years previously—though it has been strenuously advocated by the most skilful shipbuilders as well as experienced seamen—though it has been taken up warmly long since by nearly every maritime nation, it is only now receiving a proper trial in the navy to which its inventor belongs. It is not our intention, however, as we said before, to rake up again the old grievance of the long-continued prejudice against Captain Coles's plans, especially as they are now at last

being fairly and fully tested in his noble ship the Captain, which has already given splendid proof of her good qualities in her trial trips. There is, however, one passage in Mr Reed's book bearing on the past which should be noticed :—

"The turret system possesses both so many advantages, and, under certain circumstances, so many disadvantages, that its introduction almost necessarily occasioned much division of opinion among naval officers and naval architects; but I must say that I have always considered that this controversy has been unnecessarily embittered by the unrestrained manner in which its advocacy has been urged. The inherent merits of the system are, however, so great, that the only effect of this error of advocacy has been to somewhat retard its extensive adoption."

This is very significant, and is a pretty plain avowal of the opposition that this admirable design received. But why was the controversy thus embittered? Only because the trial which was demanded for Captain Coles's plans was refused, evaded, or delayed, while the ships of his avowed opponent were being built and sent to sea by the dozen. Even when Captain Coles at last obtained *carte blanche* permission to build a ship, a rival vessel, the Monarch, from the chief constructor's designs, though upon Captain Coles's principle, was hurried on, and has had a year's start of her at sea.

Mr Reed accords in his pages but grudging praise even to his own Monarch, embodying, as she does, the obnoxious turret principle, and takes care to claim any good qualities which she may possess as a fighting ship to his peculiar mode of applying the system; yet the reports of her performances, so far as they have been made public, tend to show that she is one of the best, if not the very best, ship that he has yet built, being fast, steady, and a good sea-boat, while she has en-

tirely upset his theory that broad-side-vessels' must roll less than turret-ships. She has attained a speed of within a fraction of 15 knots, being the highest performance as yet of any ironclad at the measured-mile trials, with the exception of the Vanguard. The Controller of the Navy, in referring to the reports of the cruise of the combined squadrons last autumn, says of her in the papers recently laid before Parliament :—

"The Monarch, a ship of an entirely new class, the only true sea-going turret-ship produced as yet by any navy,* is classed by the Captain of the Fleet, and by other information, as equal in steadiness of platform to the Hercules, and is spoken of as having behaved in an equally satisfactory manner as the other ships; and also that she could have fought her guns during the gale to which they were exposed. Captain Commerell, in private letters, speaks of the ease, comfort, and dryness of the ship as extraordinary."

Again :

"The turret armament of the Monarch, consisting of four 12-inch rifled guns, when considered with reference to the angle of training and its armour-piercing power at long ranges, places the Monarch as one among, if not positively, the most formidable of the ironclad sea-going ships in existence."

And in a letter addressed to the Secretary of the American Navy by Captain Macomb, commanding the U.S. ship Plymouth, which escorted the Monarch in her voyage to America with the remains of Mr Peabody, that officer reports as follows :—

"PORTLAND-MAINE, 23th Jan. 1870.

"After having escorted H. B. M. ironclad turret-ship Monarch from Portsmouth, England, to this port *via* Madeira and Bermuda, during which voyage this ship was in company, holding a position quite near her, I have consequently been afforded sufficient opportunities to form an opinion of her sailing, steaming, and sea-going qualities. During the voyage we encountered a variety of weather—viz., light, moderate, and fresh breezes, and strong

* The Captain had not then left her building-yard.

gales, with heavy seas. Under steam alone she is fast, steers well, and turns well. . . . Under steam and sail steers well, and is fast; under sail alone steers well, but not so well as under steam alone. . . . Her motions rolling or pitching are so slight that I think there would be but rarely an occasion when the height of sea would prevent her from fighting her guns. . . . Under all circumstances during the voyage, she has proved herself a 'sea-boat,' and capable of steaming or sailing round the world unattended or escorted. Altogether, I consider the Monarch the most formidable and effective ironclad vessel of war for ocean service in the world."

Nothing could be more satisfactory than these accounts, and Mr Reed may well be proud of his ship, turrets notwithstanding.

We come now to the Captain, built by Messrs Laird of Birkenhead, upon Captain Coles's own plans, and representing his system *pur et simple*. As we have said already, this ship has been most successful in her trials of speed, having realised $14\frac{1}{2}$ knots at the measured mile, and rather more on the occasion of her six hours' run in the Channel. Mr Reed is so fond of comparing the qualities of his ships with others, that we cannot do better than follow his example here, and place his ship, the Bellerophon, side by side with the Captain; and as the two ships are of exactly the same tonnage, the comparison cannot be fairer. Without repeating again the particulars which our table contains, but to which we beg the reader again to refer, it will be seen that the Captain is the longest by 20 feet, but the Bellerophon has engines of 100 nominal H.-P. more. The Bellerophon has 3 feet more beam, and draws 10 inches more water abaft than the Captain. At full speed on the measured mile the Bellerophon realised 14.23 knots, with 5966 indicated H.-P.; the Captain 14.24 knots, and 5989 H.-P. The Bellerophon carries 560 tons of coal; the Captain 700 tons. The Bellerophon is armed with 12-ton 250-

pounder guns; the Captain with 25-ton 600-pounders. The Bellerophon has 6-inch armour, with 10-inch backing; the Captain has 8-inch armour on her sides, with 12-inch backing, and 10-inch armour on her turrets. Inner skin-plating the same in both ships. Now here we see the Captain, an incomparably more powerful fighting ship than the other, steaming faster, carrying considerably more coal, and drawing less water. This is therefore another example, if one were needed, to prove the instability of Mr Reed's theory before quoted, as to the relative capabilities of short and long ships; and to establish the counter-proposition which we then put forth. On the other hand, it must be stated that the Bellerophon has a great superiority over the Captain in quickness of turning, arising partly from her proportions, but chiefly from the circumstance of her being fitted with a balanced rudder, while the Captain has a common one. The sea-going qualities of the Captain are now being tested in a cruise with the Monarch, the result of which will probably be known before these pages are published; but so far Captain Coles and the Messrs Laird may be congratulated upon the great success of their ship. Messrs Laird have also achieved a signal triumph in the Vanguard, one of the Invincible class, which attained a speed of no less than 15 knots on her measured-mile trial; and though she was designed by Mr Reed, the credit of such an extraordinary performance is mainly due to this celebrated firm, who made the engines, as well as built the ship, since those of her sister vessels which have yet been tried have not realised nearly so great a speed.

To return to the main question—the comparative value of the turret and broadside systems—it is in much the same condition, relatively, as it was when discussed in these pages seven years ago. At that time

guns of five tons' weight were the heaviest that had ever been mounted at sea in broadside-ports; and it was believed by many people that it would not be practicable to work much larger guns on that system. It was this conviction that had led Captain Coles years before to devise plans for working heavy ordnance on board a ship, and hence his idea of placing the gun in a fixed position on a turn-table inside a shield of thick armour. Mr Reed, however, maintained that ships could be built to carry the heaviest guns on the broadside; and Captain Scott, R.N., designed most admirable plans for carriages, by means of which very much larger guns could be mounted and worked with ease and safety than had been previously thought possible. The result is, as we have seen, the *Hercules* carrying 18-ton guns in broadside-ports. So far, therefore, it may be said, the superiority of the turret system is not so decided as it was claimed to be some years back. But it must be remembered that the *Monarch* and *Captain* carry 25-ton guns, that the monitors now building will have guns of 35 tons' weight, and that 50-ton guns are to appear before long. How far beyond this we shall eventually arrive at, no one can say; but it is plain that the further we go in the weight of the guns, the more decided becomes the value of the turret system of working them. Seeing what an advance has been lately made in the method of working broadside-guns, it would be rash to say that we have attained the utmost limit in that direction; but it does not at present seem probable that guns larger than those of the *Hercules* will be mounted in that manner. The large size of port necessary to admit of sufficient training is a very grave objection; and looking to the possibility of a gun being dismounted in action, or the carriage smashed by a shot entering the port, it is a serious thing to contemplate a mass of 20

tons rolling about the deck. On the whole, then, keeping in view the guns of the future, the advantages of the turret principle are quite as decided now as when it was first brought forward, with the exception that the dimensions necessary for a turret to contain the largest-sized guns are too great to permit it to be applied to sea-going vessels of small size. But in this respect the broadside arrangement is much more restricted.

There are two drawbacks to the turret system, when carried out in sea-going ships, which must be noticed—viz., the difficulty of combining with it a satisfactory method of rigging and working the ship; and the interference of the turrets with the necessary accommodation below for the crew. The latter involves the necessity for a raised poop and forecastle which prevent the turret-guns from being fired nearer to the fore-and-aft line than an angle of about twenty degrees. The truth is that the "all-round" fire has hitherto proved to be incompatible with the requisites for a full-rigged sea-going ship, and is practicable only for vessels of the monitor type, or of some such modifications of it as those adopted by Mr Reed in the *Hotspur* and *Thunderer* classes. As to the monitor *à l'Américaine*, we trust never to see such craft in our navy. They are fit only for operations in inland waters, being dangerous at sea or in an open roadstead, unhealthy at all times, and like dungeons to inhabit.

Space does not permit us to follow Mr Reed much further in his interesting work. He devotes a chapter to ironclad rams, and we agree with him in thinking that the *éperon*, or projecting spur, is preferable to either the upright stem or the overhanging form of bow for ramming purposes; but the value of this novel mode of warfare at sea has yet to be decided. The battle off Lissa, and the experience of the American war, is all we have

to guide us on this point, and none of these can be said to be conclusive experiments. It remains to be seen what effect will be produced upon a ram by a charge into a heavy ironclad at sea. This would be a very different business from the charge of the Merrimac into the old wooden ship Cumberland in Hampton Roads, or that of the Ferdinand Max into the weakly-built Italian ironclads in the smooth waters of the Adriatic. With only a slight swell, such as the Atlantic is never free from, if at the moment of collision the ironclad happened to roll towards the ram, or if the latter should be just then lifted on the top of a wave, the contact would take place on the strongest part of the ironclad's side, and the bow of the ram would almost certainly be shattered, which would make this a costly mode of warfare. Only further experience can, however, determine the efficacy of this method of fighting; but it is clear that as the power of artillery increases, the utility of the ram is lessened in comparison.

The conversion of more of our wooden ships into ironclads has been constantly urged upon the Admiralty, and numerous plans—some of them of great merit—have been suggested for that purpose. Mr Reed, however, demonstrates very clearly the wisdom of the course pursued by the Admiralty in preference to converting the old wooden ones. And, in fact, the rapid progress making in artillery, with the development of the two novel modes of warfare, the butting

ram and the devilish torpedo, only establish more clearly the superiority of the iron-built ship, with its arrangements of cellular framing, double bottom, and water-tight compartments.

When we look back upon the extraordinary change that has come over the whole science of naval warfare during the last twenty years—for it was only so lately that the old sailing-ships began to give place to the infant screw fleet—and then venture on a speculation of what may be the ships of our navy twenty, or even ten, years hence, we find ourselves completely lost. Who shall say, in this inventive age, what new engines of destruction may not be devised? Already we see a vision of shot of such enormous weight and velocity, that it would seem as if the impact of such projectiles must inevitably shatter the whole structure of any ship that could be sent to sea, even if armour could be carried sufficiently thick to resist actual penetration; and if so, the question which arises even now in some minds, will then become a prominent one, as to the desirability of armour at all. But we forbear to go any further into the regions of speculation; and in the mean time we may rest satisfied with the certainty that we possess an ironclad fleet in every way creditable to the country, and that all the tendencies of the progress of science as applied to naval purposes, are more and more to the advantage of Great Britain from her unrivalled manufacturing resources.

JOHN.—PART VIII.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE first great apparent change in a life is not always its real beginning. It may be but the beginning of the beginning, as it were, the first grand crash of the ice, the opening of the fountain. There is more noise and more demonstration than when the full tide of waters begin to swell into the broader channel, but it is not the great crisis which it has the look of being. It is the commencement of a process of which it is impossible to predict the end. This had been emphatically the case with John Mitford when he was suddenly swept out of his father's house and out of all the traditions of his youth. It seemed to him and to everybody that his life had then taken its individual shape. The chasm between the present and the past was as great as if a vast St Lawrence rolled between the two edges of circumstance, separating them more and more widely as it rose in force and fulness. But the fact was that this great convulsion was no decisive throe of nature at all, but the first impulse of life arbitrarily shaped, the beginning of individual action which might yet go to one side or other, nobody could predict which. He did not know it himself, any more than did any one of the spectators. In short, he was more certain than any one that his old life had passed away, and that all things had become new. He went about Fanshawe Regis with new eyes, curiously observing everything which before he had accepted without observation. Was it that he felt the new better? Was it that he hankered after the old? These were questions which he could not answer. The only thing he was quite sure of in respect to himself was that he was uncertain about everything, and that life was

no longer sweet enough to make up for the darkness and troubles in it. With this feeling in his mind he listened to his father's sermons, seeing everything in a different light, and went with his mother on her parish work, carrying her basket, gazing wistfully in at the cottage windows, wondering what was the good of it all. He had never questioned for a moment the good of at least his mother's ministrations until now. When she came smiling out of one of the cottages it cast a gloom upon her to find her boy, who had always been full of faith in her at least, standing unresponsive, waiting for her outside. She looked him in the eyes with her tender smile, and said, "Well, John?" as she gave back the little basket into his hand.

"Well," he said, with a sigh, "my good little mother, do you think it is worth all the trouble you are taking, and all the trouble you have taken since ever I remember?—that is what I want to know."

"Yes, my dear," said Mrs Mitford, "that and a great deal more. Oh, John, if I could feel that but one, only one, was brought back to God by my means!"

"I think they are all very much the same as they used to be," said John. "I recollect when I was a small boy there was always something to be set right *there*."

"That was the father, my dear," said Mrs Mitford. "He was very troublesome. He took more than was good for him, you know; and then he used to be very unkind to his poor wife. Ah, John, some of these poor women have a great deal to bear!"

"But the blackguard is dead now, heaven be praised!" said John.

"Oh, hush, my dear, hush, and don't speak of an immortal soul

like that! Yes indeed, John, he has gone where he will be judged with clearer sight than ours. But I wish I could hope things were really mended," said Mrs Mitford, shaking her head. She went on shaking her head for a whole minute after she had stopped speaking, as if her hope was a very slight one indeed.

"What is the matter now?"

"The boys are very tiresome, my dear," said Mrs Mitford, with a sigh. "Somehow it seems natural to them to take to bad ways. You can't think how idle and lazy Jim is, though he used to be such a good boy when he was in the choir, don't you remember? He looked a perfect little angel in his white surplice, but I fear he has been a very bad boy; and Willie and his mother never do get on together. He is the only one that can be depended upon in the least, and he talks of marrying and going away."

"You have not much satisfaction out of them," said John, "though I know you have always kept on doing all sorts of things for them. They ought at least to be grateful to you."

"Well, my dear," said Mrs Mitford, with anxious gravity, "I don't like to blame her—but I am afraid sometimes their mother is not very judicious, poor woman. It sours one sadly to have so much misfortune. She is always contradicting and crossing them for things that don't matter. I don't like to blame her, she has had so much to put up with; but still, you know—and of course it is discouraging, whatever one may try to say."

"And then there are the Littles," said John, leading his mother on.

"Oh, the Littles, dear! I wish you would not speak of them. Every month or so I think I have just got their mind up to the point of going to church. If you but knew the number of bonnets that woman has had, and shoes for the children, and even your papa's last old greatcoat which I got the tailor to alter for lobert. But it is never any good.

And though I pay myself for the children's schooling they never go. It is enough to break one's heart."

"And Lizzie's people are always a trouble to you," said John.

"Ah, my dear, but then the old woman is a Dissenter," said Mrs Mitford, with alacrity; "and in such a case what can one do?"

"But, mother dear, with all these things before you, does it sometimes strike you what a hopeless business it is?" cried John. "You have been working in the parish for twenty years——"

"Twenty-five, my dear boy—since before you were born."

"And what is it the better?" said John; "the same evils reappear just in the same way—the same wickedness, and profanity, and indifference. For all the change one can see, mother dear, all your work and fatigue might never have been."

"I must say so far as that goes I don't agree with you at all, John," cried his mother, with a certain sharp ring in her voice. The colour came to her cheeks and the water to her eyes. If it had been said to her that her life itself had been a mistake and failure, she could not have felt it more. Indeed the one implied the other; and if there was any one thing that she had built upon in all her modest existence, it was the difference in the parish. John's words gave her such a shock that she gasped after them with a sense of partial suffocation. And then she did her best to restrain the momentary sharp thrill of resentment; for how could she be angry with her boy? "My dear," she said, humbly, with the tears in her soft eyes, "I don't suppose I have done half or quarter what I ought to have done; but still if you had seen the parish when we came—— If I had been a woman of more energy, and cleverer than I am——"

"You cannot think it was that I meant," cried John. "How you mistake me, mother! It is because your work has been so perfect,

so unwearied—because it ought to have wrought miracles——”

“Oh, no, no, not that,” she said, recovering her tranquillity, and smiling on her boy. “It has been very humble, my dear; but still, if you had seen the parish when we came—the alehouse was more frequented than the church a great deal—the children were not baptised—there were things going on I could not speak of even to you. That very Robert Little that we were speaking of—his father was the most inveterate poacher in the whole country, always in prison or in trouble; the eldest brother went for a soldier, and one of the girls—— Oh, John, Fanshawe Regis is not Paradise, but things are better now.”

“My dear little mother, but they are not as good as they ought to be after the work of all your life.”

“Don’t speak of me, my dear boy, as if I were everything,” said Mrs Mitford; “think of your papa, and oh, John, think of what is far beyond any of us. Think whose life it was that was given, not for the righteous, but to call sinners; think who it was that said there was joy in heaven over one that repented; and should we grudge a whole lifetime if we could but be sure that one was saved? I hope that is what I shall never, never do.”

John drew his mother’s hand through his arm as she looked up in his face, with her soft features all quivering with emotion. What more could he say? She was not clever, never very able to take a philosophical view of the matter. She never stopped to ask herself, as he did, whether this faulty, shifty, mean, unprofitable world was worth the expenditure of that divine life eighteen hundred years ago, and of the many lives since which have been half divine. All that;—and nothing better come of it than the vice, and the hypocrisy, and mercenary pretences at goodness, and brutal indifference to

everything pure and true, which were to be found in this very village, in the depth of the rural country, in England that has been called Christian for all these hundreds of years. So much—and so little to result from it. Such were the thoughts that passed through John’s mind, mingled with many another gloomy fancy. Adding up long lines of figures was scarcely more unprofitable—could scarcely be of less use to the world. When he thought of his father’s precise little sermons, a certain stir of possibility might struggle through; for Dr Mitford spoke as a member of the Archæological Society might be supposed to speak, being compelled to do so, to a handful of bumpkins who could not, as he was well aware, understand a word he said, and was content with having thus performed the “duty” incumbent on him. *That* might be mended so far as it went; but who could mend the self-devotion, the unconscious gospel of a life which his mother set before the eyes of the village? They knew that her charity never failed, nor her interest in them, nor the tender service which she was ready to give to the poorest, or even to the wickedest. Twenty-five years this woman, who was as pure as the angels, had been their servant, at their call night and day. Heaven and earth could not produce a more perfect ministration, her son said to himself, as he watched her coming and going; and yet what did it all come to? Had Mrs Mitford seen the thoughts that were going on in his mind, she would have shrunk from him with a certain horror. They were hard thoughts both of God and man. What was the good of it? Nobody, it appeared to John, was the better. If Fanshawe Regis, for one place, had been left to itself, would it have made any difference? Such thoughts are hard to bear, when a man has been trained into the habit of thinking that much, almost anything, can be done for

his neighbours if he will but sufficiently exert himself. Here was a tender good woman who had exerted herself all her life—and what was the end of it? Meanwhile Mrs Mitford walked on cheerfully, holding her son's arm, with a little glow of devotion about her heart, thinking, what did it matter how much labour was spent on the work if but the one stray lamb was brought back to the fold? and pondering in the same breath a new argument by which Robert Little, in the Doctor's greatcoat, and his wife in one of her own bonnets, could be got to come to church, and induced to send their children to school.

Sometimes, however, John's strange holiday, which nobody could quite understand, was disturbed by immediate questions still more difficult. Mrs Mitford did not say much, having discovered in her son's eye at the moment of his return that all was not well with him; but she looked wistfully at him from time to time, and surprised him in the midst of his frequent reveries with sudden glances of anxious inquiry which spoke more distinctly than words. She did not mention Kate, which was more significant than if she had spoken volumes; and when the letters came in, in the morning, she would turn her head away not to see whether her son expected anything, or if he was disappointed. A mixture of love and pride was in her self-restraint. He should not be forced to confide in her, she had resolved; she would exercise the last and hardest of all maternal duties towards him, and leave him to himself. But Dr Mitford had no such idea. He was busy at the moment with something for the 'Gentleman's Magazine,' which kept him in his study for the first few days after John's arrival; but as soon as his article was off his mind, he began to talk to his son of his prospects, as was natural. This happened in the library, where

John was sitting, exactly as he had been sitting that first morning when Kate peeped in at the door and all the world was changed. I cannot tell whether the young man remembered that; but he was seated in almost the same attitude pretending to read, and in reality pondering over his condition and prospects, and what he was to do. Dr Mitford was seated at the other end of the room, as he had been that day. A ray of October sunshine shone in through one light of the great Elizabethan window and fell in a long line upon the polished oak floor, on the library carpet, on Dr Mitford's white head, and as far as the wall on the other side of him—a great broad arrow of light, with some colour in it from the shield in the centre of the glass. Behind this was the glimmer of a fire, and John, lifting his weary eyes from his book, or his eyes from his weary book, he could scarcely have told which, became suddenly aware of the absolute identity of the outside circumstances, and held his breath and asked himself, had he dreamed it, or had that interruption ever been? Was the door going to open and Kate to peep in breathless, shy, daring, full of fun and temerity? or had she done it, and turned all the world upside down? When he was asking himself this question Dr Mitford laid down his pen; then he coughed his little habitual cough, which was the well-understood sign between him and his domestic world that he might be spoken to; then he was fretted by the sunshine, and got up and drew the blind down; and then, having quite finished his article, and feeling himself in a mood for a little talk, he took a walk towards his son between the pillars that narrowed the library in the middle, and looked like a great doorway. He did not go straight to John, but paused on the way to remark upon some empty corners, and to set right some books which had dropped out of their exact places.

"I wish the doctor would return my Early English books," he said, approaching his son; "one ought to make a resolution against lending. You might give me a day, John, just to look up what books are missing, and who has them. I think you know them better than I do. But, by the by, you have not told us how long you can stay."

"I don't think it matters much," said John.

"You don't think it matters much! but that looks as if you were not taking any great trouble to make yourself missed. I don't like that," said Dr Mitford, shaking his head: "depend upon it, my boy, you will never secure proper appreciation until you show the people you are among that another cannot fill your place."

"But the fact is that a dozen others could fill my place, sir," said John, "quite as well as—very probably much better than I."

"What! with Mr Crediton? and his daughter?" said Dr Mitford. He thought he had made a joke, and turned away with a mild little laugh to arrange and caress his folios in the recess behind his son. Then he went on talking with his back to John—"I should be glad to know what you really think of it now that you have had time to make the experiment. I don't understand the commercial mind myself. I don't know that I could be brought to understand it; but the opinion of an intelligence capable of judging, and accustomed to trains of thought so different, could not but be interesting. I should like to hear what you think of it frankly. Somebody has made dog's ears in this Shakespeare, which is unpardonable," said the Doctor, passing his hand with sudden indignation over the folded edges. "I should like to know what your opinion is."

"I think I can get it straight, sir," said John, "if you will trust the book to me."

"Thanks—and put a label on it,

'Not to be lent,'" said Dr Mitford. "It is not to be expected, you know, that the most good-natured of men should lend one of the earliest editions. What were we talking of? oh, the bank. What is your real opinion about it, my boy?"

"I think I am ceasing to have opinions about anything," said John.

"Well, well, we need not argue about the word. Let us say impressions. I hope you are quite satisfied that you can do your duty as well or better in that way than in the manner we had intended for you. Nothing but that thought would have induced me to yield. It was a disappointment, John," said his father, turning round with a tall volume in his hand—"I cannot deny that it was a great disappointment; but you think you are able to do your duty better where you are?"

"What is my duty, father?" said John, with a hoarseness in his voice.

And then it was Dr Mitford's turn to show consternation. "Your duty," he faltered—"your duty? It does not say much for my teaching and your mother's if you have to ask that question at this time of day."

This, it will be easy to see, was a very unsatisfactory sort of answer. John got up too, feeling very heavy about the heart. "Relative duty is easy enough," he said; "but absolute duty, what is it? is there such a thing? Is it not just as good both for myself and other people that I should live for myself as I am doing, instead of living for God and my neighbour like my mother? So far as I can see, it comes to exactly the same thing."

Dr Mitford looked at his son with an absolute astonishment that would have been comical had John been able to see it. But then it was not so much his son's perplexity the Doctor thought of as that curious, quite inexplicable reference. "Like your mother!" the Rector

of Fanshawe Regis said, with utter amazement. It took away his breath. He could not even notice his son's question in his consternation. "Yes," said John, not in the least perceiving the point, "what is the good? That is what one asks one's self; it does not seem to make any difference to the world."

Dr Mitford turned, and put up the dog-eared folio on its shelf. He shook his head in his bewilderment, and gave a sigh of impatience. "You young men have a way of talking and of thinking which I don't understand," he said, still shaking his head. "I hope to goodness, John, that you have not been led astray by those ridiculous fallacies of Comtism. You may suppose that as you are not to be a clergyman it does not matter what your opinions are; but it always matters. A private Christian has as much need to be right as if he were an archbishop; and I confess, after your careful training, I little expected—a mere farrago of French sentiment and nonsense. Your mother! what she has to do with the question I can't understand."

"And I am sure neither do I, sir," said John, moved to a laugh, "nor why you should set me down as a Comtist. I am not an anythingist, worse luck—for then, perhaps, one might see a little more plainly what to do."

"If a young man, with the best education England can give, and friends to consult, who, I flatter myself, are not idiots, cannot see what to do, it does not say much for his sense," said Dr Mitford, with some indignation. "I suppose by all this I am to understand that you are tired of the office drudgery and beginning to repent——"

"I don't know that I have anything to repent of," said John, who under this questioning began to get rebellious, as sons are wont to do.

"I advise you to make up your mind," said Dr Mitford, not with-

out a half-tone of contempt. "I never thought you were adapted for business. If experience has shown you this, it is best to take steps at once. You might not like, perhaps, to return to your original destination——"

"Father, this discussion is quite unnecessary," said John, growing red. "I am not tired of office drudgery. No trade, I suppose, is very delightful just at first; and when one begins to think for one's self there are many questions that arise in one's mind. Yes, mother, I am quite ready. I have been waiting for you this half-hour."

"But not if your papa wants you, my dear," said Mrs Mitford, in her white shawl, standing smiling upon them at the door.

"I shall look after the Shakespeare when I come in," said John. That was exactly where Kate had stood peeping—Kate, who, when she was old, would be just such another woman. Would she grow so by his side? Could it ever be that she would come, in all the soft confidence of proprietorship, and look in upon him as his mother did? All at once it flashed upon him that such a thing might have been, in this very place, in this very way, had he kept his traditionary place. He might have been the Rector, putting up his folios, and she the Lady Bountiful of the parish, as his mother was. This flashed across his mind at the very moment when he was asking what use it was, and feeling that a life spent in doing good was as much thrown away as a life spent in making money. Strange inconsistency! And then he went and took the basket, with its little vials of wine and carefully-packed dainties, out of his mother's hand.

Dr Mitford watched them going away with feelings more odd and strange than he recollected to have experienced for years. He watched till the door was closed, and then he turned abruptly to his books, and gave himself up to a rummage among them for a minute, but

turned again and walked impatiently to the window, and saw his wife's white shawl disappear from the garden gate, with her tall boy by her side shadowing over her in the October sunshine. "His mother!" Dr Mitford said to himself, with a

certain snort of wonder and offence—and then went back to his writing-table, and wrote a note to accompany his article to Sylvanus Urban, who was a more comprehensible personage on the whole than either wife or son.

CHAPTER XXV.

John remained rather more than a fortnight at home. His arm healed and his health improved during this interval of quiet. But he did not relieve his mind by any disclosure of his feelings. Indeed, what was there to disclose? He asked himself the question ten times in a day. He had come to no breach with Kate, he had not quarrelled with her father; he had, on the contrary, increased his claims upon Mr Crediton by actual service; and the something which had sprung up between Kate and himself was like a wall of glass or of transparent ice, changing nothing to outward appearance. He spent his time in an uneasy languor, sometimes roused to positive suffering, but more generally in mere discomfort, vague as his thoughts were, as his prospects were, as all the world was to him. It seemed even a thing of the past that his feelings should be very vehement about that or any other subject. He had gone through a great deal of active pain, but now it seemed all to be passive, and he only a kind of spectator. A host of questions had widened out like circles in the water round the central question. What was life worth? was it any great matter how it was spent? The banker among his manifold concerns, or Mr Whichelo among the clerks, or the Rector of Fanshawe Regis in his library—did it matter to any mortal creature which was which? The one was laying up money which a great fire or a scoundrel at the other end of the world might make an end of in a moment; the other was laughed at behind his back, and outwitted by

the young men whom he thought he had so well in hand; and the third—what was the parish the better for Dr Mitford? And yet John had to face the matter steadily, as if it were of the greatest importance, and decide which of these pretences at existence he would adopt. He got no letter during this curious interval. The outer world kept silence and did not interfere with his ponderings. Heaven and earth, and even Kate and his mother, left him to take his own way.

It was not until the last morning of his stay that Mrs Mitford said anything to John on the subject. She had gone down to breakfast a little earlier than usual, perhaps, with a little innocent stealthy intention of looking at the letters, and making sure what there was for her boy; and there was one little letter lying by John's plate which made his mother's heart beat quicker. Yes; at last it was evident Kate had written to him; and if there had been any quarrel or misunderstanding, here surely must be the end of it. She watched for his appearance with speechless anxiety; and of course he was late that morning, as was to be expected. And it was very easy to see by his indifferent air that he was not looking for any letter. When he perceived it he gave a little start, and his mother pretended to be very much occupied with the coffee. He read it twice over from beginning to end, which was not a long process, for it only occupied one page of a small sheet of note-paper; and then he put it into his pocket and

began to eat his breakfast and talk just as usual. Mrs Mitford, anxious and wondering, was brought to her wits' end.

"You had better order the phaeton, John," said Dr Mitford, "if you are going by the twelve train."

"I need not go till the evening," said John; "and my mother means to walk there with me; don't you, mamma?"

"Yes, dear," said Mrs Mitford, smiling upon him. She had been looking forward to this last heart-rending pleasure, and thinking that then he would perhaps tell her something, if indeed there was anything to tell.

"Then let the phaeton take your portmanteau and bring your mother home," said the Doctor, "if you insist on taking her such a long walk. For my part I can never see the good of such expeditions. It is much better to say good-bye at home."

"But I like the walk," said Mrs Mitford, eagerly; and the Doctor, who did not quite approve of the pair and their doings, shook his head, and gathered up his papers (he had no less than two proof-sheets to correct, and a *revise*, for he was very particular), and went off to his work. "You will find me in the library whenever I am wanted," he said, as he withdrew. He thought his wife was spoiling her son, as she had spoiled him when he was ten years old, and he did not approve of it; but when a woman is so foolish, what can the most sensible of men and fathers do?

And then the mother and son were left alone, with that letter in John's pocket which might explain so much of the mystery. But he did not say a word about it, nor about Kate, nor anything that concerned his happiness; and when Mrs Mitford talked of his new shirts and stockings (which was the only other subject she found herself capable of entering upon), he talked of them too, and agreed in her remarks about the negligence

of washerwomen, and all the difficulty of keeping linen a good colour in a town. "As for your socks, my poor boy, I never saw such mending," she said, almost with the tears in her eyes. "I must take it all out and darn it over again as it ought to be. When darning is nicely done, I never think the stocking looks a bit the worse; but how any woman could drag the two edges together like some of these, I can't understand."

"It is always hard work dragging edges together," said John, getting up from the table. "I think I'll go and say good-bye to old Mrs Fanshawe, mother. It is too long a walk for you."

"I could not go there and to the station too," said Mrs Mitford, "and I ought not to neglect the schools because I am so happy as to have my own boy. Yes, dear; go and see the old people: you must keep up the old ties for our sakes, even though they are to be broken off so far as the Rectory goes;" and she smiled at him and gave a little nod of her head, dismissing him by way of concealing that she wanted to cry. She did cry as soon as he was gone, and had scarcely time to dry her eyes when Jervis came in to clear the table. Mrs Mitford snubbed him on the spot, with a vehemence which took that personage quite by surprise. "I observe that Mr John's things have not been laid out for him properly, as they ought to have been," she said, suddenly, snapping his nose off, as Jervis said. "I trust I shall find everything properly brushed and folded to-day. It is a piece of negligence, Jervis, which I don't at all understand." "And Missis give her head a toss, and walks off as if she was the queen," said the amazed man-of-all-work when he got to the kitchen, and was free to unburden himself. After this Mrs Mitford had another cry in her own room, and put on her bonnet and went across to the schools, wondering through all the lessons and all the weary chatter of the children, — Oh, what was the matter with her

boy? oh, was he unhappy? had they quarrelled? must not his mother know?

Meanwhile John strode across the country to Fanshawe to bid the old squire and his old wife good-bye. He went, as the crow flies, over the stubble, and by the hedge-sides, never pausing to draw breath. Not because he was excited by his departure, or by the letter in his pocket, or by any actual incident. On the contrary, he was quite still, like the day, which was a grey autumn morning, with wistful scraps of blue on the horizon, and a brooding, pondering quiet in the air. All is over for the year, nature was saying to herself. Shall there be another year? shall old earth begin again, take in the new seeds, keep the spring germs alive for another blossoming? or shall all come to a conclusion at last, and the new heavens and the new earth come down out of those rolling clouds and fathomless shrill breaks of blue? John was in much the same mood. Kate's little note in his pocket had a kind of promise in it of the new earth and the new heaven. But was it a solid, real promise, or only a dissolving view, that would vanish as he approached it? and might not an end be better, and no more delusive hopes? Mrs Fanshawe was very kind when he got to the hall. She told him of poor Cecily, just nineteen (Kate's age), who was dying at Nice, and cried a little, and smiled, and said, "Oh, my dear boy, it don't matter for us; we can't be long of going after her." But though she was reconciled to that, she made a little outcry over John's leave-taking. "Going so soon! and what will your poor mother say?" cried the old lady. "I am afraid you think more of one smile from Miss Crediton than of all your old friends; and I suppose it is natural," she added, as she shook hands with him. Did he care more for Kate's smile than for anything else? He walked home again in the same dead sort of way, without being able to answer even such a question. He

did not care for anything, he thought, except, now that he was at Fanshawe, to get away; and probably when he got to Camelford his desire would be to get back again, or to Fernwood, or to anywhere, except just the place where he happened to be.

It was evening when he set out to go to the station, with his mother leaning on his arm. The evening comes early in October, and it was necessary that she should get back to dinner at seven. Twilight was coming on as they walked together along the dewy road, where the hedgerows were all humid and chill with the dew, which some of these nights would grow white upon the leaves before any one knew, and make winter out of autumn. A sort of premonition of the first frost was in the air; and the hawthorns were very rusty and shabby in their foliage, but picked out here and there by red flaming bramble-leaves, which warmed up the hedgerows notwithstanding the damp. The mother and son walked slowly, to spin out the time as long as might be. To be sure they might, as Dr Mitford said, have just as well talked indoors; but then the good Doctor knew nothing about that charm of isolation and unity—the silent world all round about, the soft, harmonious motion, the tender contact and support. They could speak so low to each other without any fear of not being heard. They could look at each other if they would, yet were not compelled to any meeting of the eyes. There is no position in which it is so difficult to disagree, so natural to confide and trust. Mrs Mitford's very touch upon her son's arm was in itself a caress. My dear, dear boy, her eyes said as she looked at him. She had carried him in those soft arms, and now it was her turn to lean upon him. This thought was always in her mind when she leant upon John's arm.

"I should not wonder," she said, cunningly, leading up to her subject with innocent pretences of

general conversation, "if we had frost to-night."

"The air is very still, and very cold: it is quite likely," said John, assenting, without much caring what he said.

"And actually winter is coming! after this wonderful summer we have had. What a summer it has been! I don't remember such a long stretch of bright weather since the year you went first to school. I was so glad of the first frost that year, thinking of Christmas. You will come home for Christmas, John?" said Mrs Mitford, suddenly, with a tighter clasp of his arm.

"I cannot tell, mother. I don't seem to realise Christmas," said John.

"Well, dear, I won't press you for any promise; but you know it will be a very poor Christmas without you. Life itself feels poor without my boy. There! I did not mean to have said it; but I am a foolish woman, and it is quite true."

"Life is so poor in any case. I don't know how it can matter one way or another," said John, with a shrug of his shoulders. He was not touched so much as impatient; and unconsciously he quickened his pace and drew her on with him, faster than it was easy for her to go.

"We are in plenty of time for the train," Mrs Mitford said; "not so quick, if you please, my dear. Oh, John, it is so strange to hear you say that life is poor! Have you nothing to tell me, my own boy? I have never asked a question, though you may think my heart has been sore enough sometimes. What is the matter? won't you tell me now?"

"There is nothing to tell—nothing is the matter," said John.

"But you are not happy, my dear boy. Do you think your mother could help seeing that? Oh, John, what is it? Is it her father? Do you feel the change? It must be something about Kate?"

"It is nothing at all, mother,"

said John, with hasty impatience; and then it suddenly occurred to him that he was going away into utter solitude, and that here was the only being in the world to whom he could even partially open his heart. She felt the change of his voice, though she had no clue to the fitfulness of his thoughts. "It is quite true," he continued, "there is nothing to tell; and yet all is not well, mother. I can't tell you how or why. I am jangled somehow out of tune—that is all; there is nobody to blame."

"I could see that, my dear," she said, looking wistfully at him; "but is that all you have to say to your mother, John?"

"There is nothing more to say," he repeated. "I cannot tell you, I can't tell myself what is the matter. There is nothing the matter. It is a false position somehow, I suppose—that is all."

"In the bank, John?"

"In the bank, and in the house, and in the world, mother," he cried, with sudden vehemence. "I don't seem able to take root anywhere; everything looks false and forced and miserable. I can neither go on nor go back, and I stagnate standing still. Never mind; I suppose it is just an experience like any other, and will have to be borne."

Then there passed through Mrs Mitford's mind as quick as lightning that passage about those who put their hand to the plough and draw back. But she restrained herself. "I suppose it is just the great change, my dear," she said, faltering, yet soothing him, "and all that you have given up—for you have given up a great deal, John. I suppose your time is not your own now, and you can't do what you like? And sitting at a desk—you who used to be free to read, or to walk, or to go on the river, or to help your papa, or see your friends—it must make a great difference, John."

"Yes, I suppose that is what it is," he said, feeling that he had

successfully eluded the subject, and yet celebrating his success with a sigh.

"But I hope it is made up to you in another way," Mrs Mitford said, suddenly, looking up into his face. He thought he had got off, but she did not mean to let him off. She was a simple little woman, but yet not so simple but what she could employ a legitimate artifice, like the rest of her kind. "You had a letter from Kate this morning, dear. I saw her little handwriting. I suppose she makes up for everything, John?"

They were drawing near the station, and she spoke fast, partly from that reason, partly to make her attack the more potent, and to leave him no time to think. But he answered her a great deal more readily than she had expected.

"Is it fair upon a girl to expect her to make up for all that?" he asked. "Mother, I ask myself sometimes, if she gave up her own life for me as I have done for her—no; not altogether for her—could I make it up to her? Is it fair or just to expect it? Life means a great deal, after all—more than just what you call happiness. You will think I am very hard-hearted; but, do you know, it almost appears to me sometimes as if a man could get on better without happiness, if he had plenty of work to do, than he could without the work, with only the happiness to comfort him. Is it blasphemy, mother? Even if it is, you will not be too hard upon me."

Mrs Mitford paused a little to think over her answer; and perhaps anybody who takes an interest in her will be shocked to hear that she was rather—glad—half-glad—with a kind of relief at her heart. "John," she said, "I don't know what to say. I am—sorry—you have found it out, my dear. Oh, I am very sorry you have found it out—for it is hard; but, do you know, I fear it is true."

"I wonder how my mother found it out," he said, looking down upon

her with that strange surprise which moves a child when it suddenly suspects some unthought-of conflict in the settled immovable life which it has been familiar with all its days, and accepted as an eternal reality. He had propounded his theory as the very worst and very saddest discovery in existence, and lo! she had accepted it as a truism. It bewildered John so that he could not add another word.

"One finds everything out if one lives long enough," she said, hastily, with a nervous smile. "And, my dear, this is what I always thought—this is why I always disapproved of this bank scheme. You were hurried into it without time to think. And now that you find it does not answer, oh, my boy, what is to be done? You should not lose any time, John. You should come to an understanding with Mr Crediton and Kate——"

Heavy as his heart was, John could not but smile. "You go so fast, mother dear, that you take away my breath."

"So fast! what can be too fast, when you are unhappy, my dear! One can see at a glance that you are unhappy. Oh, John, come back! Believe me, my own boy, the only comfort is doing God's work; everything else is unsatisfactory. Oh, my dear, come home! If I but saw you taking to the parish work, and coming back to your own life, I should care for nothing more—nothing more in this world."

"Softly, softly," said John. "My dear mother, I was not thinking of the parish work—far, very far from it. I cannot tell you what I was thinking of. I may find what I want in the bank after all. Here is the train, and James waiting for you with the phaeton. Let me put you in before I go away."

"But oh, John, if it cannot be for the present—if you cannot come back all at once—now that your mind is unsettled, dear, oh think it carefully over this time, and consider what I say."

"*This time,*" John said to him-

self, when he had bidden his mother good-bye and had thrown himself into a corner of the railway carriage with his face towards Camelford—"think it carefully over *this time*." The words filled him with strange shame. He had made one disruption in his life, it was evident, without sufficient care or thought. Was he one of the wretched vacillators so contemptible to a young man, who are always changing, and yet never come to any settled determination? His cheeks flushed crimson, though he was all alone, as the thought came into his mind. No; this time he must make no hasty change; this time, at least, no false position must be consented to. He must put Kate out of his mind, and every vain hope and yearning after what people call happiness. Happiness! most people managed to do without it; even—could it be possible?—his mother managed to do without it; for happiness, after all, is not life. *This time* there must be no mistake on that head.

It was night when he reached his lodging; and his mind was as doubtful and his thoughts as confused and uncertain as when he had left it. He went into his dreary little parlour, and had his lamp lighted, and sat down in the silence. He had come back again just as he went away. The decision which he had to make seemed to have been waiting for him here—waiting all these days—and faced him the moment he returned. What was he going to do? He sat down and listened to the clock ticking, and to now and then an unfrequent step passing outside, or the voice of his landlady talking in the little underground kitchen. His portmanteau, which he had brought in with him, was on the floor just by the door. The thought came upon him in his unrest to seize it again in his hand, and rush out and jump into the first cab, and go back to Fernwood; not that he expected any comfort at Fernwood, but only that it was the only other change possible to

him. If he arrived there late at night, when nobody expected him, and went in suddenly without any warning, what should he see? The impulse to make the experiment was so strong upon him that he actually got up from his seat to obey it, but then came to himself, and sat down again, and took out Kate's little letter. It was very short, and there was nothing in it to excite any man. This was all that Kate said:—

"DEAREST JOHN,—Why don't you write to me? You used to write almost every day, and now here is a full fortnight and I have not heard from you. I think it so strange. I hope you are not ill, nor anybody belonging to you. It makes me very anxious. Do write. —Ever your affectionate

"KATE"

That was all. There was nothing in it to open any fresh fountain in his breast. He folded it up carefully and slowly into its envelope, and put it back into his pocket. Write to her! why should he write? It was not as if he wanted to upbraid her, or to point out any enormity she had done. She had not done anything; and what could he say? The future was so misty before him, and his own heart so languid, that her appeal made no impression upon him. Why should he do it? But he stopped again just before he put the letter in his pocket, and gave another glance at his portmanteau. Should he go, and carry her his answer, and judge once again what was the best for her and for himself? He gave up that fancy when the clock struck eight slowly in his ears. It was too late to go to Fernwood that night; and yet there were hours and hours to pass before he could throw himself on his bed with any chance of sleeping; and he had no business to occupy him, or work to do—and how was this long, slow, silent night to be hastened on its tardy wing? John rose at last, with a kind of desperation, and

went out. He had nowhere to go, having sought no acquaintances in Camelford. There was nobody in the place that he cared to see, or indeed would not have gone out of his way to avoid; but the streets were all lit up, and some of them were noisy enough. John wandered through them in the lamp-light with strange thoughts. He seemed to himself like a man who had lost his way in the world. He was like Dante when he stood in the midst of his life and found that he had missed the true path. To go on seemed impossible; and when he would have turned back, how many wild beasts were in the way to withstand him! Was there anybody, he wondered, who could lead him back that long, long roundabout way through Hell and Purgatory and Heaven? With such a question in his mind, he wandered into places such as he had never entered before; he watched the people in the streets, and went after them to their haunts. A strange phantasmagoria seemed to pass before his eyes, of dancers and singers, and stupid crowds gaping and looking on, amid smoke and noise and sordid merrymaking. He heard their rude jests and their talk, and loud harsh peals of laughter; he listened to the songs they were listening to with the rough clamour of ap-

plause in which there was no real enjoyment. He followed them mutely—a solitary, keen-eyed spectator—into the places where they danced, and where they drank, and where they listened to those songs, with a strange sense of unreality upon him all the while. They were as unreal as if they had been lords and ladies yawning at a State ball. And then all at once John found himself in a dreary half-lighted room, in the midst of a Wesleyan prayer-meeting, where half-seen people, like ghosts in the half-light, were calling to God to have mercy upon them. He gazed at the prayer-meeting as he did at the music-hall, wondering what all the people meant. Would they go on like that till death suddenly came and turned the performance into a reality at last? He had no Virgil to guide him, no *Donna sceso del cielo* to be his passport everywhere. And he scarcely knew what were the doubts he wanted to be solved. "Now I shall sleep at last," was all he said to himself as he went in when the night was far advanced, having spent it in visiting many places where Dr Mitford's son should not have entered. Was he taking to evil ways? or was there any chance that he could solve his own problem by means such as these?

CHAPTER XXVI.

Next morning John did not permit himself any musings; he got up with the air of a man who has something to do for the first time for many weeks. There was nobody to do anything for him in his poor lodging; no Jervis to unpack his things and put them in order. He had opened his portmanteau to take out what he wanted from it, but he had not unpacked it. It stood open with all its straps undone, and everything laid smooth by the careful hands at home, and John closed it once more and left it in readiness to be removed again when he went

out. It was quite early in the October morning, which was bright, and sharp, and frosty, with patches of white rime lying in the unshaded corners, and great blobs of cold dew hanging from the branches of the suburban trees. "My mother has had her frost," John could not help saying to himself, as he went out. And all the world was astir, looking as unlike that feverish, noisy world which had smoked and cheered at the music-halls last night, as could be supposed. When he saw the people moving about so briskly in the sharp, clear air, he could not

but ask himself, were they the same? Was that the man who had thumped with hands and feet, and roared open-mouthed, at the imbecility of the comic song? or was that he who led the chorus of exclamations at the prayer-meeting? John was in so strange a state of mind that the one was to him very much as the other, both phantoms—one coarsely making believe to be amused, the other coarsely pretending to pray. He went to the bank first, where all the clerks had just settled down in the first freshness of morning work. He went in at the swinging doors with the early public, and stood outside the counter looking for some one to address himself to. In his first glance round he saw that his place at the desk in the window from which he had so often watched Kate was filled by another; which was a small matter enough, and yet went through him with a sudden thrill, adding firmness to the resolution which began to form in his mind. After a moment Mr Whichelo rose from his desk, and came forward, holding out his hand, to meet him. "How are you, Mr Mitford? I hope I see you quite recovered: how is the arm?" said Mr Whichelo, with bustling cordiality; and John had to pause to explain how it was that he was able to do without his bandages, and no longer required to wear the injured arm in a sling.

"Mr Crediton has not come in to-day. I don't suppose we are likely to see him to-day; but you must know better than we do, Mr Mitford, for I suppose you have just come from Fernwood?"

"No, it is some time since I left Fernwood. I have been at home," said John.

"Dear me!" said the head clerk, raising his eyebrows. Mr Whichelo thought there was no such place as Fernwood in the kingdom, and was naturally astonished that any man could relinquish its delights. But then he added, with condescending moral approval, "And quite right,

too, Mr Mitford; when there is anything the matter with you, there is no place like home."

Then there was a momentary pause; the public were coming and going, in small numbers as yet, but still enough to keep the doors swinging and the clerks at the counter employed. But Mr Whichelo and John stood in the centre, between the two lines of desks, taking no notice of the public. John would have known quite well what to say to Mr Crediton had he found him there, but it was more difficult with his head clerk.

"Ah, I see," said Mr Whichelo; "you always had a very quick eye, Mr Mitford—you perceive the change we have made."

"I perceive you have filled up my place," said John.

"No, no—not filled up your place; I have put in a junior temporarily to do the work. My dear Mr Mitford," said the head clerk, with a smile, "if you were only an ordinary *employé* like one of the rest—"

"I should not be worth my salt," said John, with an attempt at a laugh.

"Very far from that; you are only too good for us—too good for us, that is all. It seems a shame, with your education, to see you making entries that any lad could make. But of course, Mr Mitford, you occupy a very different position. We are all aware of that."

"A false position," said John.

"Don't disturb the young fellow for me. No, I have not come back to work. I want to see Mr Crediton if I can. You don't expect him to-day? nor to-morrow? Then I must see him somewhere else—"

"At Fernwood," said Mr Whichelo; "you can always see him at Fernwood."

"Very well," said John. He felt as if he had got his orders when these words were said. Of course it was to Fernwood he must go to see if any comfort was to be had

there. Fanshawe threw no light upon what he ought to do, neither did Camelford; and Fernwood was the only place that remained. He shook hands with Mr Whichelo again, and went out with a certain alacrity. The junior at his desk in the window no longer troubled him. Yes; no doubt the boy would sit there, and see Kate come and go, and take no thought. The beautiful Miss Crediton, with all her gaieties and splendour, would be nothing to him: far better that he should fill that corner and make his entries, than that John should sit there consuming his heart. Fernwood was ten miles off, but it was a bright day, and to walk there was the best thing he could do. It gave him time to think, and it kept up a certain rhythm of movement and action about him which prevented him from thinking—and that on the whole was the best. The long road spun along like a thread, lengthening and lengthening as he went on, moving as if off a wheel, with half-stripped trees and falling leaves, and brown hedges, and here and there the russet glory of a bramble-branch trailing over the humid grass. Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel, he seemed to hear some one singing as he went on and on; and the gleaming line of path spun out, circling out of the horizon on one side, back into it on the other, and there seemed no reason why it should ever come to any pause. His brain was giddy, and spun, too, as the road did. He went on with a buzzing in his ears, as if he too were on the wheel, and was winding, winding, and revolving with it, now up, now down, going on and on. What the end was, or if there was any end, he did not seem to know. It was the measured chant, the circles woven by mystic feet, never ending, still beginning. He had come to the very park of Fernwood before he roused himself from this strange dreamy sense of movement. It was a brilliant autumn, and already the beech-trees

and the oaks were dressed in a hundred colours. The gentlemen of the party would of course be among the covers—and the ladies — Here John paused, and began to ask himself what his meaning was. Was it Kate he had come to see? was it into her hands that once more, once again, like a fool, he was going to put his fate?

He stopped, and leaned upon a great beech, which stood with a little forest of juniper-bushes round it, withdrawn from the road. It was on the outskirts of the park, just where two paths met—one starting off into the wilder tangled ground beyond the open; the other leading up towards the house on a parallel with the avenue which John had just left. He was crossing through the brushwood to gain this footpath, when he stopped there against the beech-tree to collect himself, feeling giddy. It was a huge beech, with a trunk vast enough to have hidden a company of people, and great russet branches sweeping down, and the juniper in circles, like the stones of the Druids, making a sort of jungle round it. Was it an evil or a good fate that brought him there at that moment of all others? He had scarcely stopped, and the sound of his foot crushing down the juniper could not have ceased in the still air, when his eye caught a gleam of colour and some moving figures passing close to him on the other side of the beech. He stood like one bewildered when he saw that it was Kate. She was walking along slowly at a very meditative pace, with her head drooping and her eyes cast down, so far occupied with her thoughts that she neither heard nor saw nor suspected the presence of any observing bystander. And she was not alone. Walking by her side, with his eyes upon her, was Fred Huntley. She was gazing on the ground, but he was gazing at her. Her face was abstracted and full of thought; but his was eager, flushed with wishes and hopes and expectation. They were not saying

anything to each other. John did not hear a word as they went slowly past; but imagine how it must have felt to wake up out of a feverish haze of doubt and inquietude and unreality, and suddenly open his eyes on such a sight! He stood spell-bound, scarcely venturing to breathe, and heard the rustle and sweep of her dress over the grass, and her sometimes faltering, unsteady step, and Huntley's foot, that rang firm upon the path. Their very breathing seemed to come to him in the air, and the faint violet scent, which was Kate's favourite perfume, and the movement and rustle of her going. They passed as if they had been a dream, and John held his breath, and all his life concentrated itself into his eyes. Her figure detached itself so against the still autumnal landscape, her grey dress, the blue ribbons that fluttered softly about her, the soft ruffled feathers, lightly puffed up against the wind in her hat—and the man by her side, with his eyes so intent upon her. It was an affair of a moment, and they were gone; and as soon as they had passed out of hearing, and were about to disappear among the trees, they began to talk. He heard their

voices, but could not tell what they said; but the voices were low, toned to the key of that still landscape, and of something still more potential than the landscape; and John turned from the scene, which was stamped on his memory as if in lines of fire, and looked himself as it were in the face, feeling that this at last was the truth which had burst upon him, scattering to the wind all his dreams.

He turned without a word, and walked back to Camelford. There seemed no more doubt or power of question in his mind. He did not even feel as if any painful accident had happened to him; only that it was all over—finished and past, and the seal put to the grave of his dreams. He even walked back with more assured steps, with less sense of a burden on his shoulders and a yoke about his neck. It had been very sweet and very bitter, delightful and miserable, while it lasted; but now it was over. And it never occurred to him that the conclusion which he thus accepted so summarily was as unreasonable as the beginning. No; the time of dreaming was over, he thought, and now at last there stood revealed to him the real and the true.

CHAPTER XXVII.

It was late in the afternoon when John reached Camelford. He had stopped to rest at a roadside public-house, where he ate and drank, as a man might do in the exhaustion of grief coming home from a funeral. He had sat before the rustic door, and watched the carts that went slowly past with heavy wheels, and the unfrequent passengers; and he had felt very much as if he had been at a funeral. It was a long walk, and he was very footsore and weary when he reached his lodgings. He was out of training, and the fire and his accident had impaired his strength, and his heart was not light enough to give him any assistance. When he

shut himself once more into his little parlour, he was so much worn out that he had no strength to do anything. He had meant to return only for the sake of the portmanteau, which imagination represented to him lying open on the floor of his bedroom, all packed, which it was a comfort to think of; but after his twenty-miles walk he had no longer the energy to gather his little possessions together. He laid his aching limbs on the sofa and tried to rest. But it was very hard to rest; he wanted to be in motion all the time; he did not feel able to confront the idea of spending all the gloomy evening alone in that dreary little room. Home, home, his mind

kept saying. It would not be cheerful at home. He did not know how he was to bear the stillness, and his mother's cry of wonder, and his father's questionings. But yet a necessity was upon him to go on and make an end of the whole matter; and he shrank from the thought of even one evening more in that half-lighted, drab-coloured, miserable room. After his first pause of weariness, he sprang up and rang his bell, and told his landlady he was going away. "Get my bill ready, please," he said; "and if you will put my things together for me, and send for a cab for the eight o'clock train—" "Lord, sir, I hope it aint nothing in the rooms! they're nice rooms as ever could be, and as comfortable as I could make them, or any woman," she said. John comforted her *amour propre* as well as he could, with a tale of circumstances that compelled his departure, and felt as if he had been addressing a public meeting when his short colloquy was over. Never in his life before had he been so tired—not ill nor sad to speak of—but tired; so fatigued that he did not know what to do with himself. But it was still only four o'clock, and there were four hours to be got through, and a great deal to do. He got his writing things together with as much difficulty as if they had been miles apart, and threw himself on the sofa again, and wrote. The first letter was to Mr Crediton, and over that the pen went on fluently enough.

"DEAR SIR,—I think it right to let you know at once—as soon as I am perfectly sure of my own mind—that I feel obliged to relinquish the post you kindly gave me three months ago in the bank. Early training, and the habits belonging to a totally different kind of life, have at last made the position untenable. I am very sorry, but it is better to stop before worse come of it, if worse could come. I do not suppose that the suddenness of my

resolution can put you to any inconvenience, as I saw, on visiting the bank this morning, that my place had been already filled up. I meant to have seen you, but found it impracticable. I hope you will accept my apologies for any abruptness that there may be in this letter, and regrets that I have not been able better to make use of the opportunity you afforded me—"

Here John came to a stop—opportunity for what? Opportunity of winning your confidence—opportunity of gaining an acquaintance with business—of proving myself worthy of higher trust? He could not adopt any of these expressions. The shorter the letter, the least said, the better. He broke off abruptly without concluding his sentence. He had very little to thank Mr Crediton for; but yet he could not, with any regard to justice, blame him. Kate's father, though he had done little for, had done nothing absolutely against him. It was not Mr Crediton he found fault with—Mr Crediton was very justifiable; and was it, could it be, that he was about to find fault with Kate?

He began to write to her half-a-dozen times at least. He began indignant—he began tenderly,—he upbraided—he remonstrated—his pen ran away with him. He had meant to use one class of words, and under his very eyes it employed another. He wrote her ever so many letters. He set before her all his passion—all his readiness to sacrifice himself—all the tortures he had suffered at the window of the bank seeing her come and go and having no share in her life. He told her what a chill blank had come over him at Fernwood—how he had felt that he was nothing to her. He told her what he had seen that morning. He was eloquent, pathetic, overwhelming. His own heart felt as if it must burst while he wrote; but as he read over each completed page, John had still so much good sense left that he dragged his stiff limbs from the

sofa and put it in the fire. It was thus he occupied almost all the time he had to wait; and it was only just before his cab came to the door that he put into its envelope this letter, in which it will be seen he neither remonstrated nor upbraided, nor even gave her up. He could not give her up, and how could he accuse her? He accuse Kate! If she was guilty her heart would do that—if not—— But alas! the latter alternative was impossible; only for “utter courtesy,” for utter tenderness, he could not blame the woman he loved.

“I do not know how to write,” he said, “though you tell me to write. Dear Kate, dearest Kate—you will always be dearest to me,—This may pass over, and be to you as the merest dream; but to me it must always be the centre and heart of my life. I don’t know what to say to you. I have not written, not out of lack of love, but lack of hope. If I could think I was any way necessary to you—if I could feel you wanted me—but your sweet life is so complete; and what is mine to be tacked on to it? I don’t know what to say. Silence seems the best. Dear! dearest! you are so bright that my heart fails me when I look at you. I drop down into the shade, and there seems nothing left for me but to keep still. I try to rouse myself with the thought of what you say—that you want me to write, that *you are anxious*—anxious about me! And you mean it, dear—you mean it, I know; but the words have a soft meaning to you different from their meaning to me. And you have no need of me, Kate. I feel it, and that takes the words out of my mouth, and all the courage out of my heart.

“I was at Fernwood to-day, and saw you, though you did not see me. You were walking in the little footpath near the avenue. Ah, Kate! but for that I think I could have gone to you, and said some things I cannot write. Do not be grieved in your kind heart because I am leav-

ing Camelford. It was a mistake, but I was to blame. I am going home, and I don’t quite know what I shall do; but time, perhaps, will make the way clear. Dearest, if ever you should want me—but how should you want me? God bless you! I have no claim to make, nor plea to put forth; but I am always and ever yours—always and for ever, whatever may happen—yours and yours only to command,

“JOHN MITFORD.”

He put the two letters into their envelopes, and sealed and put them into the post with his own hand as he went to the station. He carried all his possessions with him—not merely the portmanteau; and he was dead tired—so tired that he would have passed Fanshawe station and gone on perhaps to London—for he had dropt asleep in the train—but for the guard, who knew him. When he found himself on the little platform at Fanshawe, chilly and stupid as a man is who has just awakened from sleep, the only strong feeling in his mind was an earnest overwhelming desire to get to bed. He did not seem capable of realising that he had got home again, after his disastrous voyage into the world—he only thought of going to sleep; and it was not his mother’s wondering welcome he was thinking of, or the questions they would ask him, but a pleasant vision of his own room, with the fire burning in the grate, and the white fragrant sheets opened up and inviting him to rest. He felt half asleep when he crossed the threshold of the Rectory, and walked into the drawing-room to his mother, who gave a shriek of mingled delight and alarm at so unlooked-for an apparition. “John, you are ill; something has happened,” Mrs Mitford cried out, in an agony of apprehension. “I am only sleepy, mother,” he said. That was all he could say. He sat down and smiled at her, and told her how tired he was. “Nothing particular has happened, except in my own mind,”

he added, when he came to himself a little, "and not much even there. I am awfully tired. Don't ask me anything, and don't be unhappy. There is nothing to be unhappy about. You shall know it all to-morrow. But please, mother dear, let me go to bed."

"And so you shall, my dear," said Mrs Mitford; "but, oh, my own boy, what is the matter? What can I say to your papa? What is it? Oh, John, I know there is something wrong."

"Only that I shall go to sleep here," he said, "and snore—which you never could endure. There is nothing wrong, mamma. I have come home to be put to bed."

"Then you are ill," she said. "You have caught one of those dreadful fevers. I see it now. Your eyes are so heavy you can scarcely look at me. You have been in some of the cottages, or in the back streets, where there is always fever; but Jervis shall run for the doctor, and the fire must be lighted in your room."

"The fire by all means, but not the doctor," said John. "I have no fever, mother; but I have walked twenty miles to-day, and I am very tired. That is all. I am not hiding anything: let me go up-stairs."

"You are sure that is all? A fire in Mr John's room directly, Jervis—directly, mind; and some boiling water to make him a hot drink—he has caught a bad cold. Oh, my dear, you are sure that is all? And, John, you have really, really come home—to stay? You don't mean to stay?"

"I don't know what I mean," he said. "I have left Camelford. I have come back like a piece of bad money. But, mother, don't ask me any questions to-night."

"Not one," she answered promptly; and then besieged him with her eyes—"Twenty miles, my dear boy! what a long walk! no wonder you are tired. But what put it into your head, John? Never mind, my dear. I did not mean to ask any more questions. But, dear me! where could you want to go that was

twenty miles off? That is what bewilders me."

"You shall hear all about it to-morrow," said John, rising to his feet. He was so tired that he staggered as he rose, and his mother turned upon him eyes in which another kind of fear flashed up. She grew frightened at his weakness, and at the pale smile that came over his face.

"Yes, my dear, go to bed—that will be the best thing," she said, looking scared and miserable. And it went to John's heart to see the painful looks she gave him, though it was with a mixture of indignation and amusement that he perceived the new turn her thoughts had taken. He could not but laugh as he put his arm round her to say good-night.

"It is not that either," he said; "you need not mistrust me. Staying in Camelford will not answer, mother. I must find some other way. And I have had a long walk. I am better now that my head is under my mother's wing. Good-night."

"I will bring you your hot drink, my dear," said Mrs Mitford. She followed him in her great wonder to the foot of the stairs, and watched him go up wearily with his candle, and then she returned and made the hot drink, and carried it up-stairs with her own hands. Was it all over?—was he hers again?—her boy, with nobody else to share him? "If he only escapes without a heartbreak, I shall be the happiest mother in the world," she said to herself, as she went down-stairs again, wiping tears of joy out of her eyes. Without a heartbreak! while John laid his head on the familiar pillow and felt as if he had died. He had no heart any longer to break. He must have something to do, and no doubt he would get up next day and go and do something, if it was only working in the garden; but as for the heart, that which gives all the zest and all the bitterness to life, that was dead. His life was over and ended, and it seemed to him as if he could never come alive again.

TRADE - UNIONS.

IN a former article* we stated the leading principles which ultimately govern the relations between capital and labour. The discussion brought us into contact with a doctrine which has been largely used in defence of Trade-Unions, and has brought them no little sympathy in quarters not naturally prepossessed in their favour. It is asserted that on many points the wages obtained by the workmen are determined in no slight degree by bargaining; and then it is added that the labourers do not bargain on equal terms with their employers—that each workman is isolated and unable to enforce what is fairly his due, and that Trade-Unions help him with a combination which remedies his natural weakness, and enables him to deal on fair terms with the superior position of his master. We stated how much truth and error we conceived to be involved in this doctrine. We thus reach the second division of our subject—that part of it, namely, which contains the economical principles which the Unions claim to have appreciated, and to carry out by practical organisation.

The Unions appeal to political economy. They profess to act in obedience to its laws and to seek the execution of its suggestions. They put forward in their defence a body of doctrine, and thereby raise an issue of which economical science must be the judge. In trying this issue we shall on our side appeal to the general principles laid down in our previous article: for it is of the utmost importance both to the wage-receiving classes as well as to the country at large that the real economical truth in this important matter should be correctly apprehended. The Unions themselves, by the profession of

certain doctrines, admit the necessity of establishing the position of masters and men on scientific grounds.

The first assertion put forth by the advocates of Trade-Unions alleges that their aim is to secure a permanent minimum of wages. They not only seek to give help to the individual workman, who does not and cannot know what is the true market-value of his labour, and who can easily be overpowered by the counter-bargainer to whom he is opposed—they aspire to a much greater and nobler end. Their ambition is to place the labourer on permanently solid ground, to secure for him an existence which befits civilisation, and, whilst admitting the range which must be conceded to bargaining, shall nevertheless prevent him from being degraded into a condition unworthy of him as a man. Wages shall not fall below a certain point, proclaim the Unions; and we, the Unions, shall also determine that point. The workman may obtain more, if circumstances whether of trade or bargaining favour him; less he shall never receive from his employer under pain of that employer's business being stopped altogether by the strike we shall decree. There is a certain nobleness in this language—it has a grand air of philanthropy; nay, it is an ideal which every man would rejoice to see realised. It will be a blessed thing indeed for any country if its workmen shall never receive less than a satisfactory minimum of wages. But our previous discussion has taught us that the propriety, on grounds of humanity, of every man being rewarded with a remuneration which shall give comfort and even dignity to his existence, does not express

* See article "Trade-Unions" in our May Number.

the whole of the problem. There is at least one other element in it which must be combined with the fitness of the minimum wage. Can it be permanently assured? Good wages are an excellent thing, but their desirableness will not procure them unless they are possible. To preach to a master that he shall not pay below a certain amount will not be sufficient for reaching the wished-for end; some one else must be preached to besides the master, and that is the workman himself. The labourers must not have families beyond the means of obtaining work for them at this minimum rate. Do the Trade-Unions recognise the fact, that it is far easier to procure good wages for the labourers when their numbers are not in excess, than it is to prevent the labourers from multiplying beyond the power of the market, or even of the whole nation, to maintain them? Those who seek to lay down a fixed and imperative minimum of wages must deal with all the forces which are acting on masters and men. They must have capital enough—that is, food, clothes, materials, and tools enough—to set the men to work; further, they must possess a market which will sell off the goods produced—a demand which will allow of the required minimum being obtained; and then they must deal with the labourers themselves, and provide effectively that the sharers in the proceeds shall not be too many to render it possible to distribute the full minimum to each. These are not easy conditions to fulfil, and unfortunately for all parties alike, the leaders of Trade-Unions show but a faint perception of the necessity of meeting all these requirements together. It is very easy to say, Give five shillings a-day to every man you employ, or we shall strike; but even if the masters agree to obey the requisition, it far from follows that there will be five shillings a-day for every labourer who wants

employment. The Unions are profoundly silent on this point, yet it is the very kernel of the principle of a minimum, if it is to be an economical truth. To insist on a given wage for the men employed, by itself alone, is nothing else but pure bargaining—it is not a general economical principle, a scientific and enduring method of permanently improving the wages of the working classes. To exact a given wage from the employers, if many workmen are left unemployed, is not a raising of the general standard of the whole class. It may be within the power of a Union to prevent any master from procuring labourers at particular times except upon wages which it shall determine. It may say to a master tailor that he shall pay five shillings a-day to a few workmen, and not four shillings to many; but if the buyers of coats will purchase coats made with labour paid at five shillings a-day only in reduced quantities, it is inevitable that some of the workmen shall obtain no wages at all. In such a case, to talk of securing a minimum of wages as a permanent standard is mere sound and absurdity, unless the leaders mean by this process to starve the labourers into reducing their numbers and limiting their marriages and the size of their families. If such is their meaning, then their action in this matter is directed far more really and more severely against the men than against the masters; and justice obviously demands that they should let the workmen who subscribe their money to the support of the Unions know they are subscribing for enforcing restraint on themselves—that they are setting up a contrivance for procuring large wages for a few men, and no wages for the remainder—and that those who invented this contrivance are perfectly aware that a minimum of wages which would be satisfactory to their feelings can be procured only from a due proportion be-

tween work and population. By avowing a minimum of wages to be their aim, the expounders of the principles of Trade-Unions necessarily imply that those who cannot get work must come upon the work-house or emigrate. There is no escape from this conclusion; and it is of the very highest importance that the labouring classes should thoroughly take in this inevitable result of an inexorable law.

But in truth this plan of securing a permanent minimum of wages is nothing but an agreeable vision, which the leaders of Trade-Unions dangle before the eyes of their followers. It gives a scientific look to their action; and the workmen bestow their support on these institutions more confidently when they are made to believe that those who understand such matters, those who know something about political economy, are accomplishing a vast boon which is fairly within their grasp. Who is there to tell them that wages, for a continuance, must depend on the demand there is for work and the number of the workmen? It is easy to perceive that on a given day the men may insist on a minimum below which they will not work, and, as we have admitted in our first article, may possibly obtain it; but when the matter passes on from a particular struggle to a general and abiding result, it is not so obvious to minds untrained in science that the permanent remuneration of labour is an exceedingly complex problem, and involves many more elements than are ever heard of in the councils of Trade-Unions. If Trade-Union orators were challenged to explain to their followers what they propose to do with the workmen for whom no work at the fixed rate of wages can be found, and what measures they mean to adopt to prevent the continuance of such an excess of labourers, the pleasant dream of a minimum of wages would speedily vanish from their speech. But it will be said, Talk

about a minimum of wages is a shallow and transparent device in the lips of Trade-Unionists; but is such a thing impracticable by its very nature? Is it impossible that nations should settle down into a minimum of remuneration for labour, and maintain its existence for long periods of time? By no means: a minimum may be a very practicable matter, and has been realised in many countries. Indeed the universal tendency of all nations has been to gravitate towards a minimum. The apparent breach of this law exhibited to recent times is exceptional. It is the result mainly of the wonderful acquisition of mechanical and chemical force obtained from the discoveries of science, and the enormous impulse which has thereby been imparted to industry. Steam is the generator of many exceptions. Every nation on the face of the globe feels its transforming power; and one of its most prominent effects has been to create such relations as that which England and a few other manufacturing nations occupy towards the bulk of mankind. Trade penetrates everywhere; but precisely because it is in our age a remodeler, a reconstructor of many societies, its course is one of vast disturbance, — of beneficial disturbance, certainly, — but still of disturbance. It is in these days eminently unsteady; its action is volcanic; it upheaves and it pulls down. It overthrows old methods, it substitutes new ones, which are themselves in turn revolutionised. Nowhere is a stable, permanent, normal condition established. But it was not so in the past, it was not so in the youth of the present generation, it is not so still in many regions of the earth. Trade was then but slowly progressive, and wages experienced little change. Neither population nor the fruits of its labour increased rapidly or largely, and thus a practical kind of minimum prevailed. Such a minimum, as yet little ruffled by

the spasmodic convulsions of manufacturing countries, is still spoken of as existing in Norway and other lands. In other regions the minimum is little, if at all, above the limits of what is indispensable for bare existence. In the vast expanse of China, we are told of a mode of life which contents itself with the minimum of necessary food, and this as a permanent form of society. A stationary or moderately-progressive society rests always on a minimum of wages. The vital matter is the point at which this minimum establishes itself. We do not require a Trade-Union to teach us the doctrine of a minimum: it exists as a fact over a large part of the human race. Trade-Unions mean by the term a minimum adequate in their estimation; and thus the points to be ascertained are, What is a satisfactory minimum? and how is it to be accomplished?

To the first question the Trade-Unions give no intelligible answer: at least they define the minimum to be all they can get by fighting; and to the second they reply, that a Trade-Union is the most effective instrument for obtaining the end desired, precisely because it is the best weapon for fighting. We have shown that, on the contrary, it is eminently unfitted for the office of fixing a minimum, because it takes no notice of all the forces which determine the result. The process is at once empirical and incomplete. It says it must have so many shillings; fights for so many shillings; and learns only by the issue of the struggle how many shillings it can have and will have. As to permanence it does not offer one single guarantee, except the incessant recurrence of a fight whenever a variation is threatened. But nature has provided a process of very different efficacy. The habits of a people founded on all the circumstances of their position are perfectly capable of establishing as real and as large a mini-

mum as human life is capable of. A people which has accustomed itself to a certain standard of comfort calls into action all the forces of the situation. It learns prudence. It resists a deterioration of its state as degrading and full of suffering, and thus, by a kind of spontaneous, unconscious action, applies a remedy by the postponement of marriage, by emigration, and other measures. It may be subject to great variation in the rate of wages, especially in days like ours. If prosperity abounds, it will steadily raise its standard, and permanently secure some of the good acquired. If adversity assails it from causes beyond its control, it will bear, like the men of Lancashire, evils which no art could avert, and will be careful to retain its moral tone unimpaired. It achieves these ends without artificial expense and without violence. It achieves them because all the natural forces are suffered to work each after its own law. The minimum it attains is built on quite another foundation than the precarious issues of successive battles. It reposes on the basis of a population whose numbers accommodate themselves to the general products of industry, and to the share which accrues by natural law to the capitalist and the labourer. Such a minimum is an invaluable blessing for a people; but it is not always obtainable throughout a whole population under the actual circumstances of England.

It is to be feared that much bad political economy, many crude and erroneous notions, are spread over the working classes on this very point of the nature of the remuneration they receive. Trade-Unionists profess to be economists. It would be a valuable service indeed if their teachers would enlighten the minds of their disciples in this matter. Wages are reckoned up in money. The association with the word wages is always that of money. Capital, too, is counted in money;

and thus both wages and capital come to be regarded as only division and distribution of money. A very pernicious consequence naturally flows from this impression. The mind is blinded to the perception of the fact that money is only an instrument for exchanging wealth, and is not wealth itself, except as a machine, in precisely the same sense as a locomotive or a mill is wealth. No wonder, then, if the labourers are slow to observe that the meaning of the word wages for them is the amount of things which they can purchase in the shops; and still more slow to notice that the money which is paid them on Saturday nights has been bought by their employers with goods that he had to give away to obtain it. Thus the real character of these problems remains hid from them. Money is to them a thing of indefinite size, whose limits they are unacquainted with; which comes easily—how, they know not—to rich masters, and of which these masters seem able to acquire unlimited supplies. Their opinions on these matters might be sensibly modified if their eyes were opened to perceive that the minimum so loudly vaunted by their leaders depended on the quantity of goods produced in the world, and that if the stock is diminished, the sharers in it must of necessity receive less. Such knowledge might enable them to perceive further that it was quite natural that the wages of Lancashire should sink below their wonted minimum during the diminution of wealth created by the cotton famine; and that it is just as natural that their own wages should sink also when any powerful cause interfered with the production of wealth.

In furtherance of this object, to obtain a permanent minimum of wages, Trade - Unions prescribe rules for the limitation of the number of apprentices which each master shall be permitted to engage. These rules will not apply to the

greater number of trades comprised within Trade-Unions; for they do not employ apprentices at all. In such trades, however, as masonry, and those requiring skill acquired by long training, apprentices find a natural position, and thus fall under this regulation of the Unions. It is not a testimony in favour of these artificial limitations on apprentices that they are manifestly reactionary—that they recall practices which thrive in days when commerce was feeble and confined to narrow circles, but which have been discarded as the complications and the vastness of modern times were gradually developed. They savour of a spirit which speaks of the handloom and the spinning-jenny. Their tone is the tone of monopoly—of the confinement to a few of advantages which might be open to the many—of a temper which secures its own benefit, and is heedless of that of others. And thus they display a feature which characterises most of the regulations enjoined by Trade-Unions. They are directed against the men, against fellow-labourers, far more than against the masters. They are selfish contrivances by which those that are in drive off to starvation or emigration those that are out. It is right, therefore, that the members of Trade-Unions should be fairly told that the limitation of apprentices, like the general doctrine of an arbitrary minimum, is artificial legislation levelled against themselves; that they are subscribing to enforce rules which shut out from employment all but the admitted few; and which preach the doctrine that they must restrict the number of their children. Thus the question again recurs—and it is one which, for their own sakes, they ought distinctly to answer—whether it is their opinion that this is the best and easiest method of forcing them to adapt their numbers to the means of employment; and whether they believe that the prosperity of the whole body of workmen is most

effectually promoted by an arrangement which places the decision of how many shall be apprentices and how many shall not in the power of a few persons.

But another consideration presents itself here, which we shall find to apply to other proceedings of the Unionists. If the restriction on the number of apprentices applies pressure on the working classes against the undue multiplication of their numbers, its action is equally unmistakable in restricting the amount of production, and consequently diminishing the quantity of wealth. It is very important that the operation of this cause should be clearly understood. If every man born could be set to work on the creation of wealth, beyond doubt a large expansion of wealth would be the inevitable consequence. So far, then, as men are not set to work, there is a diminution of wealth; and a Unionist may reply that, apart from all regulation about apprentices, every force which limits the number of workers, restricts the production of wealth. Hence, he may argue, whether this limitation of numbers is effected by rules about apprentices, or by the action of spontaneous and natural causes, the result is always the same, and therefore no special objection can be raised against rules which decree the number who shall go on with the trade as being specially prejudicial to the general wellbeing of the labouring classes. But this argument overlooks a very radical distinction between the action of natural causes and that of artificial regulation. When the workmen are left to themselves to discern the position of the trade, the demand for labour is as sure a guide as the nature of human life can supply. If it rises, their skill and energy are in request; and the tendency of human nature to raise its standard of comfort may be trusted to assert itself. The generation of wealth expands with the demand for labour, and men who

are well off are likely to listen to prudence. The permanent improvement of the working classes depends upon this law of human nature. But it is quite otherwise when the determination of the number to be trained for effective labour is left to the *a priori* idea of a small number of men. In this case there is no security that workmen will be forthcoming according as the demand arises; and if there is expansion of demand, it will tend to be appropriated by a few. Masons may so consolidate themselves into a guild as to be sluggishly contented with their condition, and to be heedless of the wants of the community. The instinct of self-interest will not be wholly wanting, we freely grant; but it will act with very different energy from what it would display when the call to labour by the certainty of reward falls freely on the mass of workmen. Hence, when the supply of labour is governed by natural causes, wealth is created as rapidly as the circumstances of society, in respect of its demand for labour and its power of remunerating it, will allow. In the former case, men resting on privilege and monopoly are sure to follow the law proclaimed by experience: they will respond with comparative feebleness to the summons to exertion, and the material progress of society may be seriously impeded. With that progress the welfare of the labouring classes is indissolubly bound up.

Still more grave are the regulations which forbid piece-work and machinery. They reveal the profound narrowness of conception, the ignorance of economical laws, which characterises the leaders of Trade-Unions. They may rail at political economy as unreal and untrue; but they will not escape the condition which human nature imposes on mankind. Political economy, so far as it is true, is but the exponent of the nature of human beings and of the material forces to

which they are subject ; and so far as it is not true, it is not political economy at all. To prohibit piece-work is to extinguish every ardent and progressive faculty in men—to take away from them that impulse to effort which is the surest guarantee of their improvement—to destroy that incentive to action which is the strongest call to great deeds—and to reduce the mass of the workmen to the standard of the selfish, the lazy, and the inefficient. How can a greater cruelty be practised on the energetic and the high-spirited, than to forbid them to use their strength and their resolution to the winning of a higher reward ? Can the disposition of Unionism to act against the working classes themselves, to press on the labourers far more than on the masters, be more manifestly shown than by a rule which has for its special aim to repress the exertions of a man who seeks to better his condition ? Some of the Unionists have contended that piece-work leads to badness of workmanship ; but this is an idle statement, unavailable for their purpose of justifying the prohibition. The master is the true judge of the quality of the work that he pays for. If working by the piece produced inferior goods, he would not require the aid of the Union in substituting the system of wages by the day. In truth, this plea of inferior workmanship is a new pretence—dust scattered in the air to blind the eyes of observers. Piece-work is disliked from the one feeling which dominates the political economy of the Unionists. Their spirit is intensely socialist : they dislike the masters much, but they dislike the active, ardent, energetic workman still more. Piece-work brings higher wages to the industrious labourer : it raises him above his fellows ; and they detest this. Their real aim is comfortable wages and short time, to be enjoyed by every man alike ; or, where this is impracticable, the obtainment of this condition by a favoured por-

tion, and the abandonment of the remainder of the workmen to the workhouse. In the pursuit of this much-desired end, they heed not whether piece-work may not accomplish a greater production, and thereby enlarge the stock to be divided amongst the labourers. They are unwilling to have a maximum of produce, the largest practicable creation of wealth, if it is to be achieved by the vigorous energies of thriving labourers, standing by the side of inferior work and lower remuneration of the languid and the idle. Thus they contravene one of the most vital elements of the prosperity of the whole nation, and, most of all, of the labouring classes themselves—a large quantity of wealth produced, and a large store to be divided.

Hostility to machinery is natural ; but it is also in the highest degree ignorant and unscientific. It is scarcely possible that machinery, which performs more work and requires fewer hands, should not for a while bring suffering to some of the labourers ; but to infer from this fact that therefore its introduction should be resisted, even by violence, is to sentence human life to stagnation, and to render the stationary state the highest limit of happiness obtainable. No principle more fatal to the wellbeing of the whole people can be conceived. If the machines of England were suppressed, half of her people would inevitably perish of starvation. If she failed by her engines of every kind to produce goods for which foreign agriculturists will give food in exchange, the crops and cattle of the country would speedily be consumed, and what but death would bring down the population into proportion with the food produced in her fields ? How would Manchester, Birmingham, Sheffield, and scores of other towns and counties be fed if the machines employed in their factories were destroyed by the command of the Unions ? Nay, how would it fare with the Union-

ists themselves? The prohibition of machinery is too absurd for serious refutation. The conception of such a design could be possible only in minds ignorant of the very first elements of the structure of society—of the way in which men live together in a civilised community. It knows nothing of one of the most obvious facts revealed by experience—that the multiplication of goods produced by machinery at reduced cost is the most prolific source of an increased demand for human labour. Do the Unionists imagine that fewer printers are employed than there would have been of copyists if printing and the steam-press had not been invented? Do they believe that they and their families would be better clad if Manchester and Leeds had no mills driven by machinery? Robert Stephenson, the great engineer, thought otherwise; for he announced many years ago that that mighty machine, the railway, had then paid off the National Debt—that is, that it produced annually a clear additional quantity of wealth, a net profit of surplus goods, equal in value to the charge for paying the interest on the National Debt. Do the Unionists believe that if the coaching interest of former days had had its Union, and had been strong enough to forbid the railway, the wages of the combined working classes would have been greater at this hour? How much of this vast increase of goods produced as net profit, without cost, has gone to the labourers? Nay, is it not certain that they have gathered much the largest share? Or again, has the invention of the thrashing-machine, of the many implements for reaping, mowing, and other work of husbandry, of the steam-plough, lowered the rate of agricultural labour? Are the wages of farm-servants lower than they were in the days of the flail? But we have said that the opposition of the Union to machinery was natural, only its real character should be understood. Some men in a given

locality or trade may be thrown out of employment by the invention of new machines; as they may be by the substitution of Free-Trade for Protection. But what is intelligible, and in a sense excusable, in an individual workman, who is the victim of the general progress of the whole people, is unintelligent and discreditable when put forth as a general doctrine. The true course is to mitigate suffering by help afforded in the transition to another occupation; but war against machinery is war against the happiness and the improvement of every class in the nation.

Another object of the fierce hostility of the Union is the working overtime. Here a distinction of some importance must be noticed. The length of a day's work is greatly a matter of custom; and custom, in the economical state of a nation, is a force from which valuable service may be derived. It is extremely desirable that labourers should have in their minds a standard of the duration of labour, that their feelings should be attuned to a limited number of hours devoted to toil, that labour expended beyond this amount should be regarded as an exceptional effort, but that the prolongation of the normal day's work should be considered as a fall in their condition from which they should energetically seek every practicable escape. In other words, an excessive length of the day's work should be regarded as a misery, calling for counteraction by a reduction of their numbers. In our former article we expounded the inevitable law which governed the numbers of all animals, and from which the human race can obtain no exemption. We said enough, we hope, to repel the charge of inhumanity in the proclamation of this necessity. The resistance, therefore, of custom to excessive length of toil is a power drawn from suffering; and on no account would we utter a word to weaken its action. On the one side it

tends to limit the numbers of the population ; on the other, its effect is to increase cost of production, and thereby to induce efforts to render that cost endurable to consumers. The long hours of incessant toil devoted to the acquirement of a scanty sustenance by needlewomen is a calamity to be deplored. It were better that they had never been born if no alleviation of their fate is possible. The influence, then, of custom in creating the feeling in a man that he will not marry, or will emigrate rather than be oppressed by toil of exorbitant duration, is a most valuable agent in promoting a state of society in which human life will be worth the living ; but the attainment of this laudable end is far from being the sole or indeed the chief aim of the Unions in their enmity to overtime. We encounter here again the old feeling, jealousy of the energetic workmen, the dislike of the mass to see some of their fellows emerge above them by superior industry. In some trades overtime is inevitable, for the calls for work are fitful. How many clerks in great firms in the foreign trade are exempt from extra hours on mail-days ? How many printers can escape the call for additional hours of labour when a public emergency of whatever kind creates an exceptional demand for printing ? How many of the judges of the land are safe against lengthened days and protracted assizes ? To fight against such occasional demands for overtime is to contend against the law of human life. But we own that we look with no friendly eye on overtime-work as an habitual practice. We think that the general tendency of such a system is the depression, not only of the workmen's happiness, but also of his permanent condition. There is a fatal facility in converting an occasional practice into an abiding habit. It is much easier, too, to consent to a little longer exertion than to a diminution of food and

comfort ; and, consequently, the pressure to resist deterioration is much more quick and vigorous in its action when the rate of wages is attacked than when the day's work is lengthened by an hour. Suffering there must inevitably be when the means of remunerating labour decay ; but, in the long-run, we are persuaded the condition of the working classes will be more effectually readjusted by a fall of wages than by an increase of the hours of labour. A population settling down into acquiescence with an augmented length of the day's work is a most melancholy and most unsatisfactory spectacle. It will right itself sooner, and with less misery, if it finds its remuneration in food and clothing inadequate, than if it learns the evil custom of thinking a long day's work natural.

We have not yet finished the long list of interferences with the supply of labour dictated by the Unions, and which breathe the same spirit of establishing a monopoly against the labourers themselves. Thus they object to the employment of women, not as being unsuited to their sex or injuring the domesticity of their homes, but as creating competition against the men, and thereby reducing the rates of wages. So also they vigorously endeavour to control the use of boys, for they become formidable rivals of the men, and often are capable of doing the same identical work as men. Then, again, they forbid various practices which directly tend to increase the productiveness of the labourer's energy, and thereby obtain for him a superior remuneration to that accorded to his fellows. They limit the number of bricks to be carried in a hod ; they will not suffer the mason to perform any of the functions which they choose to allot to the plasterer ; they interdict the shaping of stones at the quarry ; and will not suffer materials to be employed which proceed from labourers who are disobedient to their

respective Unions. By such regulations they wage war against the masters and the labourers together. They vexatiously and mischievously interfere with the free action of employers in directing labour to its most efficient employment; whilst they restrict the amount of work executed by the labourer, to his own injury and that of his family, to the avowed raising of wages without increase of productiveness, and to the consequent depression, and perhaps ruin, of those of their own class who encounter a diminished demand for labour.

Such are the chief economical doctrines and practices now advocated by the majority of Trade-Unions. Their quality—that is, whether they are true or false—is obviously a matter of incalculable importance, not only for the masters and the people at large, but also for the Unionists themselves. And this importance is still further enhanced by the fact that these doctrines not only constitute the principles which guide the conduct of the Unions, but also are enforced by coercion and violence against those who dissent from them. Union men will not work with those who do not join the Union; and if employers venture on employing the latter, a strike swiftly compels compliance with the orders of the Union. If, then, these doctrines offend against the principles of common-sense—if they contradict the laws which patient observation have discovered to be most efficient in generating wealth and promoting the public good—the thrust in them by force on those who fail to perceive their correctness acquires a character of exceedingly great gravity. If they are erroneous—if they restrict the general prosperity—the harshness, nay, the cruelty, of imposing them on dissentients lays the heaviest responsibility on the leaders of Unions. It is bad enough to prescribe erroneous and impolitic regulations to those who voluntarily consent to be governed by them; but

to exact submission to a mistaken policy, and to deprive free men of their liberty of rejecting it, under pain of starvation for themselves and their families, is a proceeding which strikes at the fundamental principles of social justice. The least that might be expected is, that men, before embarking on measures so full of coercion for others as well as of risk to themselves, would have taken pains to explore the nature of the ground they stood on, would have studied the counsels of experience, and would have endeavoured to place their doctrines on the solid basis of rational investigation. But no such love of truth, no such sense of responsibility, is to be discovered in the action of Trade-Unions. As against the masters, their sole expedient is a mere trial of strength: as respects the regulations which they frame in their own supposed interest, we find monopoly for themselves, and reckless contempt for the liberty, the interests, and the sufferings of others. They abandon them to destitution, or at least they tax them in the shape of the additional cost which they inflict on production. It is essential to observe the character of their action on this vital point. Mr Mill and other political economists have laid down that wages depended on the ratio between capital and labour—that is, in clearer words, between the quantity of wealth applied to production and the number of the population: but this formula does not state exactly the whole truth. The quantity of capital—of wealth—is not fixed: the determination of wages is not the division of a given and unalterable sum. Capital, too, and labour may vary but little, and yet wages may experience a great and permanent rise. Thus it happens that the superior productiveness of a virgin soil in a colony may yield much larger profits and much ampler wages at the same time. The fruitfulness of the labour is a most in-

fluent factor in this problem. Now, how do Trade-Unions operate on this ground? So far as they inculcate a minimum below which no man shall work, they come under the protection of a natural principle—one which nature will take care shall be obeyed, but one also on which it is wise to forestall nature, before her inexorable might is brought into play. The question here is simply whether the machinery of Trade-Unions is the best which can be employed for such a purpose. But it is otherwise with those many regulations which increase the cost of labour, and at the same time diminish its productiveness. The workman is to demand a higher wage from his employer: and yet he is ordered to work less energetically, not to use wheelbarrows for carrying his bricks, not to accept piece-work, not to endure the assistance of machinery. He must take distinct pains to produce less for the maintenance he receives from the capitalist, and through him from the consumer. The cost of production is thus raised: goods, if bought at all, must be bought at a dearer rate; and thus the whole community—Unionists, non-Unionists, and the whole people—are impoverished by the forced inefficiency and unproductiveness of labour. Every one suffers, for there is less wealth created, less to be divided amongst all. This is true even where the number of the population has adjusted itself to the quantity of employment which can be procured at the increased cost of production, for the total earnings of the whole society are diminished. But how much more certain and more vast is the suffering where the Unions, in the name of their political economy, issue a new code of wages! Even for their own members they seldom can succeed in maintaining the same command of employment as before, for increased wages mean increased prices, and fewer purchasers, and

less demand for labour. As every one buys nominally with money—really, with the goods he possesses—if there are fewer goods, there must be less to buy with; and if, at the same time, those that are bought must be procured with a larger quantity in exchange, purchases must still further diminish, and the reward for labour be reduced. But what becomes, then, of those who are unable to procure work? The law of population is allowed by the Unions to act upon them with its full force; nay, by their prohibition of all extra exertion, its power of destroying is aggravated by their conduct. But at any rate, the Unionists reply, we secure good wages for those who are employed. That is possible, undoubtedly, but at what cost?—at the cost of retarding progress, of stopping improvement, of arresting, by the prohibition of machinery and similar proceedings, that multiplication of wealth which is the indispensable condition of a thriving people.

To the direct effects of Unions we must add an indirect one, which oftentimes works enormous evil. The system of Unionism places it in the power of a very few men to inflict great suffering and severe destitution on a large number of innocent persons. The refusal of those engaged in a single branch, though small, of manufacture—such as the strike of ship carpenters a short time ago—may bring the whole business to a standstill, and strip multitudes of employment. The small band of that particular Union may plead that their labour is their property, and is subject to their entire discretion; but the answer is that the Union is a combination, which can be used to apply coercion on masters, purely because the strike of the men of a single Union creates a loss far more extensive than the mere cessation of their own labour. The Unions profess that they exist for the purposes of jointaction: they thereby avow that

they have great power of influencing the fortunes of others by their conduct, and thus they raise a question of vast public interest, and which they cannot evade by the plea that they may dispose as they please of their own labour. Actions which are perfectly legitimate when performed by men individually, may call for public control when executed by the same men upon a conjoined plan and in combination. Landlords, tenants, and gamekeepers may carry arms singly, or in small parties; a union of all these classes in a county, using their guns in concert, and in obedience to a central authority, would be put down by the law as dangerous to the public peace. It is for the Unions to show that this power, wielded by a Union, small in numbers, but most efficient from its position, can be, and ought to be, placed at the disposal of a single will.

Nor must the annoyance given to masters—the interference with their liberty to act freely as may best suit their trade—the uncertainty engendered by the action of the Unions, the lock-out, the suspension of business, the impediments brought against the most productive employment of capital—be left out of the long catalogue of the progeny of Trade-Unions. We speak not here of the injury done to the masters: that would be reckoned of little moment with the Unionists: it is only the discomfiture of the enemy. We wish to point out rather to the Unionists the manifest loss which the crippling of the liberty of the masters creates for themselves. The trade is impeded, its growth hampered, its continuance endangered, its produce lessened for all. Surely the thought ought to come home to the minds of the Unionists, whether this loss is wisely incurred—whether the benefits supposed to be realised by the proceedings of the Unions compensate for the injury—what these benefits are, and whether they are capable of

being clearly and intelligibly stated. The Unionists cannot contest the fact, that the planning and administering of the business lies in the hands of the masters, and that the results of the common labour of masters and workmen must turn on the efficiency of his administration. The workmen of a manufacturing town must depend on the management of the masters; and if it is held that that administration ought to be checked, the capacity of the checking force to judge and to criticise intelligently and safely ought to be clearly established, for the sake of the united interests of all concerned. Do the Unions really pretend that incessant and uncertain regulations about the length of the day's work, the number of apprentices, the carrying of bricks in wheelbarrows, and the like, produce good that is more than an equivalent for the anxiety and the uncertainty brought upon the employers?

Such are the economical principles professed by the leaders of Trade-Unions. How many of the working classes understand and accept these doctrines? How many of the Unionists themselves? It is easy to persuade a workman that if he join with his fellow-labourers in demanding higher wages, the strength of the combination may extort concessions from employers; and so they subscribe their weekly payments for the chances of good which the struggle may bring. There is a gambling, lottery-like look about the affair which is intelligible and attractive. But how many of them have counted the cost? How many, still more, are able to weigh the problem as to the ultimate benefit to be derived from equal wages demanded for all, from hostility to machinery, from war against overtime and higher wages accorded to skill and energy? How many have gone below the surface, beyond the apparent and visible gain to themselves from repelling machines which, no doubt, may

bring to them individual loss? One thing is certain: multitudes reject these doctrines and the practices founded upon them. Multitudes are found who are ready to accept the wages offered by masters, who are eager to advance themselves in the world by superior effort and aptitude, who shrink from the misery brought on their homes by long-protracted and often-defeated strikes,—who, in a word, prefer liberty, freedom to use their ability, both of mind and body, in the manner which they may think most efficient. Taking the whole country through, the voice of the labouring classes preponderates in condemnation of Unions; and no one can deny that, of those who are enrolled on their lists, thousands are actuated by fear and not by conviction. And what say the Unions to those who refuse to join their ranks? How do they respect that liberty to do as they like in others which they are so vehement in demanding for themselves? Let the murders of Sheffield, the rattening of Manchester, the picketing of London, the rioting of Thornycliffe, give the reply. Let the answer be sought from the cowardly conspiracy to assassinate, which has recently dishonoured the building trade of Manchester and attested the fearful demoralisation of English workmen. Where are the teachers who address the reason of the dissenting workmen, who unfold the principles of Unionism, who define and justify its action, and who convince the understanding by the demonstration of assured gain? We see little of such teaching. But compulsion, violence, destruction, death—these are the hideous instruments by which the unconvinced workmen are taught to do benefits to themselves. If the advantages of Unionism were so palpable and so certain, the need would be small to preach fraternity, equality, and social union by a terrorism which derives its precedent from the con-

verting processes of the Frenchmen of 1793. Yet those Frenchmen could urge with truth that, at any rate, they shook off the fetters which privilege and despotism had fastened upon France. But here, in England, it is liberty which Unionism attacks with unceasing ferocity; it is the free exercise of his right to work when he pleases, and on what terms he pleases, which is hated in the workman; it is the industrious, uncombining, intelligent artisan whose tools are destroyed and whose life is taken if he desires to be free. Able and excellent men may be carried away by sympathy for the working classes, whose minds they know, and whose hard fate they are so often obliged to deplore. Intellectual writers, like Mr Mill, may, in a glow of democratic enthusiasm, turn their backs on common-sense, and step forth as the advocates of associations which seem to protect the weak against the strong, the poor against the rich; but it would be well if they would reflect on which side respect for the greatest of all the poor man's rights—his right to liberty and to the free command of his own labour—reveals its beneficial influence. They might spare a moment to consider, not only whether the economical principles on which Unions proceed are conformable to the laws which govern human industry, but still more, whether they do not cast the working classes—their labour, their future, their material and moral wellbeing—at the feet of a few able, ambitious, and unscrupulous men. A child can see how arbitrary the orders of the Union leaders are, how small is the basis of fact they go upon, how capricious are their decisions, and how tyrannical their action against Unionists and non-Unionists alike. Is it the deliberate opinion of Mr Mill that the agency of these men is the best that the labouring classes can adopt for the permanent elevation of wages? Will he undertake to

declare his conviction that the attainment of adequate wages is in real honesty the main object of their efforts? Will he assure the country that their aim is not political and democratical? Perhaps Mr Mill may sympathise with them on this very ground, that they unite the huge mass of individual labourers into a combined political force. Be it so: we will not consider here the expediency of such a policy; only let it be avowed. Let every member of a Trade-Union be plainly informed that he is subscribing his money to a great political institution, and that he must look for compensation for the expensiveness of the Union, and the misery which it so often brings on himself and his family, to the political gain which it is likely to bring him. If such a declaration of the principle of the Union were authoritatively put forth, then there would be no need for economical argument; but at the same time there would be an end of the delusion that higher wages were obtained by a machine framed for a political purpose. But, indeed, Mr Mill and other defenders of Trade-Unions have been lately supplied with the means of learning what the political economy of Trade-Unions may become, and to what end strikes may be directed. They will find exceedingly interesting information on these points in the French correspondence of the 'Pall Mall' of April 20. One of the chiefs of the "Association Internationale des Travailleurs,"—whose headquarters, by the way, are in London—laid down with delightful naïveté that, "capital should bear no interest." What does Mr Mill say to such a doctrine? No one has explained with greater ability than Mr Mill that capital is the indispensable condition of social existence, and that the motive for its accumulation is the profit to be derived from its use. Is he prepared to rewrite that chapter on political economy, or to denounce

this novel language as the ravings of a lunatic? But if the new theory is owned, is there not the further question, whether institutions which foster such ideas deserve to be encouraged? Might not a word of seasonable caution be given to English workmen who might be tempted by the exquisite notion of reducing the rich to surrender by a universal strike of all the butchers and bakers in the world? The words, at any rate, of the active-minded Frenchman were outspoken; he confessed that the rules of the International Association, as also of other Unions, were to follow the same course, and had political as well as economical ends in view. Be it so, we again repeat; only let them be no more discussed as institutions for raising wages. The creation of "a society of working men, which is to have the right of abolishing private property in land, and making the soil common property," is not a measure framed for procuring the proper wages for the Thornycliffe colliers. A society which declares that "its effort should be directed against the economical, political, judicial, and religious orders," stands on ground of a wholly different kind from the relations between labour and capital.

We now meet the question, What says the law of England to Trade-Unions? Up to the last session of Parliament, Trade-Unions were wholly without the pale of the law, with one exception. "Strikes are unlawful combinations punishable at common law, and unions for raising funds to support the men engaged in such strikes are unlawful associations." The exception was made by 6 George IV., 129, which allowed workmen to meet for consulting upon and determining the rate of wages which the persons present at the meeting, or any of them, should demand for their work, or the hours during which they should work. The

result was that the funds of Unions might be plundered with impunity by their officers, for the law refused to recognise the existence of Unions: in the eye of the law no one had been robbed. Last year the law was so far amended that the funds of Unions cannot be plundered without the committal of a crime; and the regulation was just, for stealing in no form ought to be countenanced by the law. But the general legal status of Unions remains unaltered. They still continue to be illegal societies, as being combinations in restraint of trade. The term is of wide application, but Sir W. Erle describes it as the violation of the right which both the public and each private person has "that the course of trade should be kept free from unreasonable obstruction." Acts of coercion which molest or injure persons who refuse to join Unions, or work for masters on terms different from those laid down by the Unions, are manifestly unreasonable obstructions to trade, and indefensible in law and morals. But the Unions may reply that these acts are not prescribed by their rules; they are the deeds of individual persons. But the same defence will not be valid at law for those who induce others to cease working for their employers. Money paid, as it rules, "not to work," with the view of damaging and coercing the employer, is an illegal restraint of trade. Several combining to perform this act are guilty of a crime. Further, persons cannot combine so as to create a mutual obligation which would be binding on them not to work except on terms prescribed by the combination. Every member of a Union, therefore, is entitled to withdraw from any such regulation; and if he is punished by the forfeiture of past subscriptions, or in any way, it is an offence at law. The general principle of the law is the expediency of free competition both for employer and employed, and for the interest of the whole

community; and at every point of their action the Unions obstruct free competition and freely expose themselves to the penalties of conspiracy.

Ought the law to be amended? Ought Trade-Unions to be relieved from these disabilities? These questions bring us to the practical and final part of our subject. It must be admitted that the right of the Unionists to combine cannot turn upon the goodness or badness of their political economy. Error of opinion, if not carried out into practical action, is not an offence at law; for then who of us would escape? Error must be combated by education; this is the only legitimate and effectual method for its correction. It is not as an economical and scientific doctrine, but as a practical principle, that combination is forbidden by the law. The law proclaims the principle of free competition. This includes the free right of a man to dispose of his time and labour at his pleasure, as a portion of the universal political principle of liberty. The State of England has liberty for its foundation; and where liberty is curtailed, the onus always lies on the curtailer. English society assumes always that liberty is the best state—best for wealth or for happiness; and when its law condemns Trade-Unions, it is because it believes these combinations are in restraint, not so much of trade as of liberty. Nevertheless it is very possible that prohibitions issued in the name of liberty may be excessive—they may reach farther than the object aimed at; and it is a perfectly fair question whether Trade-Unions are associations so essentially incompatible with freedom of action as to call for repression. Combination is not necessarily wrong or impolitic. There are endless combinations for a multitude of purposes with which the law does not interfere. The end pursued, and the manner of the pursuit, are the two elements which

determine the justifiableness of every combination. We have shown that many of the objects sought by Trade-Unions wantonly and cruelly violate the freedom of every Englishman, and enormously injure the wellbeing of the labourers themselves and of the whole nation. They come into hurtful and senseless collision with one of the most fundamental principles of the prosperity of a people—the increase of production, the enlargement of the fruits of labour, by rendering it more efficient and more creative of wealth. The earnings of the whole people, the stock of wealth to be divided, are directly lessened by many of the regulations of Trade-Unions. If they had their way unchecked, their tendency would be to secure a comparatively high rate of wages for a portion of the people, whilst they drove off the rest into emigration or starvation. We have seen, too, that they place the control of the force which must always limit population in the hands of a very few persons instead of the collective action of men working individually under the influences which real life brings to bear upon them. These are principles which violate the laws of man's social existence, if the judgments of political economy may be relied upon as true science, and they are injurious to the wellbeing of the whole community. We do not say that men ought to be restrained in their liberty of action by law because they set themselves in hostility to science; but we assert that combinations involving coercion, much more violence, are the avowed enemies of society, and justly forfeit the protection of the law. Taking our stand on this principle, we readily concede that some Trade-Unions must be acquitted of offence against law or morality; and we are obliged to admit further that this distinction between the legitimate and the illegitimate action of Trade-Unions has taken sufficient hold of the public

mind to render the legalisation of such Unions as are exempt from coercion probable. The presumption, in our day, always sets strongly in favour of freedom—though, strange to say, in this case, this feeling is applied to the help of men who are glaring offenders against liberty.

Assuming, then, that a change is inevitable, the inquiry rises to great importance, How ought the position of the working classes in reference to associations to be dealt with practically? One fact in that position at once acquires conspicuous prominence—the violence, the deeds of outrage against life and property, which mark the path of so many Unions. The Unions may have a show of reason in demanding that the labourers shall be freely permitted to assist one another in carrying out common ideas respecting the conditions on which they will consent to work; but the Unions themselves, however reasonable their general claim may seem to be, are out of the pale of sympathy, nay, of consideration, so long as they combat with Lynch law those whose views differ from their own. The liberty of the non-Unionists deserves equal respect with their own. They come into court with unclean hands; they ask to be free at the very time that they will not suffer their fellows to have freedom. What other class of men in the kingdom, except the professional criminal class, assail those opposed to them in opinion with the ransacking of houses, destroying of tools, with blowings-up by gunpowder, with picketing, and every conceivable kind of illegal and anarchical coercion? Surely it is only the barest reason, the smallest satisfaction due to the rights of every workman, that nothing shall be done to concede the demand of the Unions until they can prove by their own conduct that they have the capacity to exercise freedom. The property destroyed, the misery inflicted, the bloodshed, all cry out

that nothing shall be done in favour of men who condemn and with horrible deeds violate the law. The time for concession ought not to be considered as arrived until Unions can point to a retrospect of good conduct—till they have established their own capacity to obey the laws of the land and of morality. Assuredly every right-thinking man will feel that the concession of freedom and the repression of violence ought to march together. To give additional advantages to criminals, and to bestow no protection on their victims, is a course of legislation which even the most pronounced Radicals must hesitate to pursue.

There is another measure which, in our judgment, should be simultaneous with relaxation. If the men choose to combine, innocently as regards others, in carrying out a joint plan for the securing of proper wages, let the contributions and the sacrifices they require be exacted avowedly for this end. The union, on the contrary, of a Benefit Club with a Trade-Union is radically vicious in principle. The two ends have no connection whatever with each other. The oppression which it involves for many of the Unions is nothing short of a positive crime. The victims here are the Unionists themselves. The subscriptions paid painfully during long years become a pledge for unquestioning obedience to the will of the Union chiefs. They assume the character of a stake to be forfeited on the exercise of independent action. They furnish the materials for those terrible fines which extort unresisting submission. How can a man be a free agent when the means he has accumulated from past labour for assistance in sickness or old age, are lost as the penalty of disobedience? Public morality is concerned in the suppression of such a wrong. Some ingenious persons have replied that the separation of the benefit fund from the contributions for acting on wages,

would act as an incentive to increased violence and disorder, inasmuch as the fear of forfeiting the benefit secured by past payment raises a feeling of resistance to striking. We can see nothing in this objection. On the contrary, we are persuaded that the working of the division of the two funds would take the opposite direction. The men would be far slower to support Unions and to strike, if separate and distinct payments had to be made for this purpose. They would be moved to reflect whether the end justified means which would certainly be painful. The benefit obtained by strikes and other devices of the Union leaders would be brought into direct comparison with the cost which they entail; and it cannot be doubtful that a strong reluctance to such an expenditure would be developed. The vast fund supplied by the payments made for benefit purposes contributes the vital force of Unions, and we repeat that such a perversion involves injustice towards contributors, and calls for suppression by law.

These three measures—the effective repression of the violence practised by Unions on their own members and non-Unionists, the adjournment of any measure of legal recognition until the Unionists place themselves on a level of good conduct with the rest of society, and a separation of the funds given for benefit objects from the subscriptions applied to carrying on the struggle for wages—seem to us all that legislation can perform in this very grave matter. There remain the remedies which flow from voluntary action—from methods which the state of commercial civilisation may originate from time to time. First amongst these is the institution of courts of conciliation for each trade. We have shown in the preceding article that they are exactly adapted to meet the uncertainties which beset English trade—uncertainties which press alike on masters and workmen.

If the labouring classes are animated with a friendly feeling towards their employers—and when undisturbed by self-seeking agitators they naturally fall into such feeling—such meetings of the representatives of the employers and the employed are peculiarly fitted for an investigation of the facts of the situation in common. Masters and men would then both look the actual state of the trade in the face, and if an alteration of wages is demanded, the reasons for the change could be debated and judged in the presence of all the interests involved. Passions stand in the way of the accomplishment of this great object; but it is the business of civilisation to subjugate passion to reason. Difficulties incessantly raise themselves on both sides. The Unions inflame the men against the masters, and the masters resent with anger the interference of the Unions. There remains between these two hostile forces the good sense of Englishmen, and fortunately that is strong enough to produce the work desired if proper methods were taken for bringing it into play. The presence of men whose characters combine sympathy with intelligence is the most important power for success; and there is no lack of such men in England, who may be relied upon for rising up to the demands of the time whenever the state of feeling around summons them to action.

Another method for counteracting the mischievous influence of Unions is to be found in co-operation. The association of masters and workmen in such a partnership as shall give the latter a share in the profits, however arranged, is founded on principles alike consonant with economical science and the laws of human nature. The community of interest generates real goodwill and material support. It is obvious, however, that the system of co-operation, from its very nature, has but a limited range. It requires generally a large business, many

workmen, a great employment of capital, and a sphere for a wide common action. In manufacturing districts it probably has a great future before it. The belief is held by many that it can contend successfully with individual competition in the retail business of large towns and thickly-populated districts. We are unable to feel so great a hope. Retail business, except in localities where a large body of working people form a natural association, capable of easily combining to frequent a common store, belongs, we think, to the keen superintendence of the concentrated personal interest of the private shopkeeper. However, what co-operation will be able to effect can be ascertained only by actual trial. Its forms may be most numerous and most diverse: it is a creation of time and place and circumstances. Practical experience alone can discover the many points at which it may make its entry into English trade.

Finally, we must call into play the good sense and the intelligence of the working classes themselves. They support Trade-Unions in the belief that they promote their interests; it is for them to recognise the nature and the working of these associations. It is certain that their maintenance entails a heavy burden on their means. It is equally certain that the instrument which they employ—the strike—often inflicts cruel misery on them, on their wives and their families. Are they sure that they get an equivalent for these sacrifices? In the long weeks of idleness and reduced resources, have they meditated on the question whether their sufferings and their losses were balanced by a clear acquisition of certain gain? Their own sense of equity and fair-play, so natural to Englishmen, must have been often revolted by the sight of the violence, of the deeds of outrage and murder, which have brought dishonour on the good name of the workmen of England.

Has it raised in them the doubt whether a policy which requires such means for its support can be sound, or be fitted to promote their welfare? They must know, too, that they, the labourers of England, possess friends of the sincerest loyalty amongst the other classes of the English people. Do they reflect on the shock which the working of these institutions inflicts on their goodwill — how it tends to deaden their zeal, leads them to despair of imparting aid by their counsels and their co-operation — how it drives them to abandon them to the rule of Union leaders? They may for a moment imagine that these leaders, because they belong to the same class with themselves, may be identified with their interests; yet every Englishman knows well how fatally irresponsible power, whether vested in a despot or a Union chief, works for those who are subjected to its influence. To be told that they are striking for better wages may sound pleasantly in their ears; but have they a single reason for believing that they can extort from masters wages which these masters, from the competition amongst themselves, would not have granted of their own accord? They are intelligent enough to understand how injurious these interruptions to trade must be to its prosperity — how difficult and uncertain they render the task of management to the masters. They can perceive how likely their con-

duct is to drive off the trade to new localities, or even to foreign countries. Is it impossible to make them comprehend that a business requires materials and wages to be provided beforehand, before goods can be made and sold; and that to harass by interruptions and outrages those who own this capital is not only to diminish its productiveness but also to discourage its accumulation, and thereby to provide smaller means for getting employment for themselves and their children? If they are too dull — but we do not believe the imputation — to observe and reason upon such things themselves, the higher sensibility of their wives may yet be powerful enough to be instructed by the effects produced on their families. We hear much in these days of the intelligence and the rights of women: a noble opportunity is now offered to the women of the working classes to exhibit a proof of their ability by gathering up perceptions which their husbands may be too slow to notice. Let them put a few plain questions to the men, and insist on full and direct answers. Let them ask simply but firmly for the reasons which govern the conduct of Trade-Unions, and enter upon a rigorous account of the good and the evil which they generate. Let the women of the English labourers address these inquiries to their mates, and be resolved to obtain answers, and we shall have smaller need to write about the Trade-Unions.

THE ADMIRALTY.

MUCH unmerited and senseless abuse has been heaped on the old Admiralty Board as an institution, and some just reflections on its shortcomings have occasionally appeared. But statesmen, whose characters are honoured in this country, deemed the old Board to be admirably constituted for the despatch of business, and for insuring a full consideration of the manifold and difficult problems it had to decide. In such a department as the Admiralty there must be distinct branches, which ought to work with a mutual and earnest desire to assist each other in a common purpose and for a common credit. These ends were attained by the branches being severally allotted to different members of the Board, who collectively in council determined on all matters tending to change any established principle of the Service, as well as on all measures of importance. "Boards," as these meetings were called, were held daily, or very frequently, during each week; and their decisions, which were at once minuted, were paramount in every branch. The branches being superintended each by a member of the Board, measures were systematically undertaken, unexpected hindrances were encountered, and unexpected facilities were improved by a corresponding adjustment of work. Each superintendent of a branch being a party to the decisions, an individual character was as certainly imparted to the results as if they had issued from one person only. But setting aside theory, undoubtedly this system, approved by such Ministers as Sir James Graham, Sir Francis Baring, Lord Halifax, and the Duke of Somerset, after each had enjoyed many years' experience of Admiralty business, is likely not only to possess merit, but merit of the highest order.

VOL. CVII.—NO. DCLVI.

The question may be plausibly asked, Why, if the Admiralty was so well constituted, did it sometimes fail to work in a satisfactory manner? The reason is, that although its constitution was excellent, its composition has been sometimes indifferent. However nearly perfect the organisation of a department may be, the purpose of the organisation may be utterly frustrated by bad administrators, just as a mechanical construction, faultless in principle, must fail if composed of faulty material. So, when the Admiralty department formerly failed, the cause was bad management, and not a defective organisation. Cabinets fail under corresponding conditions, yet this has never been advanced as a reason for their organic reconstruction. But the method of transacting business has undergone a change which is of vital importance. The Board meetings have now been discontinued in any proper sense, and most important measures have been acted upon by some Lords, of which other Lords have known nothing. A notable instance of this has been exposed by the members of the Board themselves. Mr Childers, in the recent debate on his Retirement Scheme, asserted that the scheme was supported by his colleagues. Evidently, from what passed on a following night in the House, the First Lord had been called upon by Admiral Robinson, the Second Naval Member of the Board, to retract the assertion. The notorious result of the altered organisation of the Admiralty is an absence of any common principle of professional policy, a want of concert among the branches, conflicting regulations, and ill-advised orders. In short, it is admitted by those who are competent to judge of the manner in which Admiralty business is conducted,

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that the changes in the constitution of the department would have subverted its administrative powers, even had the branches been under the guidance of the most discreet and the wisest men. The chaos into which the Admiralty is plunged, shows that the Lords are unequal to their work, as it is now conducted; and their painful sense of inadequacy creates in them, among other mischievous consequences, an irritation which is manifested by foolish instructions, and by captious unbecoming answers to unavoidable requests for explanations. Thus official correspondence degenerates into wrangle, which, however amusing it may be at the home ports and on foreign stations, is wholly mischievous, being derogatory to one party and unimproving to the other.

This disorganisation of the Admiralty, its discourtesy, its harsh treatment of civilians, its want of sympathy for the active service, and the disdainful extinction of the naval element at the Board, have destroyed feelings the loss of which is deplorable. The professional love which has hitherto sustained the efficiency of the Navy has received a severe shock. If this feeling be destroyed efficiency must be lost, though the simple restoration of the feeling, if long absent, will not at once restore efficiency. That can be secured only by sedulous training. Lukewarm officers will not qualify themselves for duties which may be remote, nor will they excite in the men a desire to excel as sailors. Professional zeal must be a sustained feeling, if a navy is to be kept in a fitting condition to deal with an enemy in whom the feeling has never slumbered. However difficult it may be to the First Lord and the Secretary of the Admiralty to realise the fact, there is no way in which the safety of the country can be more endangered than by extinguishing this sentiment of devotion in the Navy.

The dangerous theory that the

Navy should be ruled absolutely by a Minister, in the sense that his professional advisers shall be released from responsibility, is avowedly brought into practice at the Admiralty. If the naval advisers of the Minister are to be absolved from direct official responsibility to Parliament, a great national danger is evidently incurred. Whether they are to be his colleagues or chiefs of branches only, it is of vital importance to the safety of the country that they should be accountable for the acts that emanate from the department. A civilian placed over the navy will certainly be unable rightly to decide on many professional questions, and the responsibility should rest with those who are competent to the task. A naval Lord of the Admiralty is not an executive, like an officer in commission, nor is he a clerk; and if he is not an administrator, he is a nonentity. He owes to the Navy a similar protection to that which the Army receives from the Commander-in-Chief. The men of the highest reputation in the Navy have held, and their opinion is obviously just, that the especial duty of the senior naval Lord is to maintain the discipline and the sufficiency of the fleet. They have insisted that, when these vital points are threatened, his bounden duty is to protect them; and if he should be unheeded on matters so infinitely important, and still retain his seat, he is an abettor in producing the national mischief he foresees.

The Secretary of the Admiralty has taunted the civil branches of the naval administration with a want of ability for the conduct of business. He, and men of his class, forsooth, are to endow these branches with "commercial" acumen! Assuming the taunt to be just, though only for argument's sake, people will still ask what advantages their services will entail. In such an inquiry as his challenge provokes, the remarkable commercial history

of England during the last four years must unavoidably be an element. A reference to the daily papers during that period proves that scandalous commercial events have happened so frequently, and have been marked by so much vice, or so much folly, as seriously to affect the prospects of the country. The pauperism of some classes, the ruin of others, and the depression of commerce, are consequences brought about by commercial men, and those who followed in their wake. Nothing has more frequently damaged the repute of British manufacturers in foreign countries, than the detection in their goods of a fraudulent debasement of quality and deficiency of quantity. Of course there are thousands of merchants who do honour to their country; but never was there a bolder demand on public credulity, after all we have suffered, than for a merchant of 1869 to require that a special confidence should be reposed in his class. Moreover, can the Secretary suppose we have forgotten the prodigious sums which ship-owners received for transport service during the old French war, and in the recent Russian war; and the exactions insisted on for extending the periods for which ships were hired? Would he have us forget the shameful violation of contract in the supply of preserved meats; or the numerous instances of wretched material and "scamped" work in the gunboats built by contract during the Russian war?

Take, again, examples from the United States of commercial cupidity. The Northern States, during their recent civil war, were plundered to such an extent by private dealers as to add seriously to their national debt. Whatever these dealers could extort from the nation, by appealing to its hopes or its fears, was inexorably demanded.

From all this we should be led to a conclusion the reverse of that which the Secretary has so offen-

sively thrown as his own in the faces of Government officials.

In discussing the expediency of employing in a public capacity men who have commercial interests connected with warlike resources, we must contemplate the possibility of their being corrupted by an enemy. For instance, shipbuilders may derive a larger gain merely by delaying or withholding assistance from their own Government than can be earned by duly supplying it. All our laws assume that among tempted men the integrity of some may fail. Even in our Naval and Military Discipline Acts there are clauses which contemplate that officers and men may be suborned by an enemy; and the risk of commercial treason can be no more discarded from consideration than the clauses referred to can be expunged from the Discipline Acts. This general conclusion, therefore, attaches to the whole question. In all matters which affect the safety of the country, do not discard resources which you control absolutely for those which are beyond your control, even if the cost of the former should be somewhat the greater of the two.

Among other considerations, it must be borne in mind, that in this great commercial country, where the highest official emoluments are small as compared with the profits of successful merchants, we should, if we seek for merchants to fill high office, only obtain third-rate or broken-down men.

Strenuous efforts have been made by interested people to decry the Dockyards. Every isolated case that appeared against them was perpetually thrust into notice; whilst the many advantages they have secured for the country have seldom been represented. The object of the efforts to disparage the dockyard establishments has been to throw the work hitherto performed by them into the hands of great private firms. Arrangements already made, or in progress, un-

mistakably show that these firms must virtually consider themselves subsidised by the certainty of inheriting future Government work, for obviously the reduction of the dockyards is a prospective benefit to them. The disposition to depend less upon the dockyards than it has been our policy to do, is not warranted by any just economical considerations, nor by any sound consideration respecting our preparations for war. The price of work executed in them as compared with the work done in private yards, is a favourite topic for the interested detractors of the dockyards to dwell upon. But the work in dockyards is the cheaper, if its superior fitness for its purpose be rightly estimated. Durability is a quality in every estimate of the sort; in ships of war and their equipment, durability and strength are of all qualities the most essential; and in these, no private ship-builder would venture to compare his work with that done in a royal dockyard.

Hitherto a spirit has prevailed in the dockyard establishments which has made them thoroughly reliable. When great efforts were required of them, they never disappointed the Government, nor thought of giving only a "fair day's work for a fair day's pay." Whatever could be done by men, was cheerfully done by them, and the amount of work they accomplished was acknowledged by all candid witnesses to be prodigious. The existence of this admirable spirit cannot be disputed; and to discard the extraordinary reserve-strength to be derived from it is unworthy of officials who comprehend the vital necessities of England, and have no other end in view than her continued prosperity. A vast number of the men who were animated by this spirit have been discharged under very afflicting circumstances; and the tradition of their wrongs will impress dockyard men with entire

distrust of Admiralty justice, and render them resentful for years to come. The temper provoked by this treatment of their fellow-workmen may influence them when their cordial efforts are again besought to avert a threatened war by a speedy preparation for it, or to bring an existing war to a successful end. We shall have no compensation for this loss from the private builders, who will exact from the nation whatever its exigencies compel it to pay. When threatened by a foreign combination, or stricken by some catastrophe in the progress of a war, a Government which has relied upon private firms must succumb to their demands, however enormous those demands may be. Therefore no English Government with a due sense of the difficulties which from time to time may henceforth, as they have hitherto, beset the country, would ever venture, by crippling the dockyards, to place private firms in a position to add to the distresses of the country. If beguiled into relying principally upon these private establishments, the country, in the day of her extreme need, will hold the same relation to them as the owners of a derelict ship hold to exacting volunteer salvors. Besides the inefficiency and eventual extravagance that will be occasioned by impairing the capabilities of the dockyards, and by fostering at their expense the private ship-builders, there are other reasons why such a policy would be most hazardous. There have been occasions when the Government deemed it necessary to prepare for rapidly arming, without indicating to the world their impression of such a necessity; and doubtless many occasions will again arise for similarly-concealed preparations. The gravest consequences may in such cases turn upon betraying no appearance of menace or of alarm. Whilst the Government control efficient dockyards, unnoticed mea-

asures may be so advanced that at the proper time an armament may be developed with a rapidity that can be produced only by well-considered arrangements, imparted to none but trustworthy public servants. By acting on this principle of preparation and of concert with reliable officers, Prussia heaped upon Austria the humiliation, disaster, and debt which, had the principle been neglected, it might have been her own lot to incur. The principle is as suitable to maritime as to military States ; and by its application or the neglect of it, the wisdom or the folly of an Admiralty may be measured. If we depend in a great degree upon private builders for the first effort, progress towards armament cannot be made without attracting the notice of foreign Governments, and plans cannot be matured secretly for the prompt equipment and combination of ships. Of course the first effort may not be successful, however well made ; but it may be disastrous if ill made, as in the case of Austria. At any rate, it will affect the succeeding events of a war. Now, for England to commence a war with advantage, and during its progress to remedy disasters and to pursue successes with rapidity, she must, as a base of operations, have well-placed arsenals with numerous readily-accessible docks, and with an ample complement of trained artificers ; and these arsenals must, as already shown, be under the control of the Admiralty.

Portsmouth and Plymouth fulfil these conditions. They are admirable as places of refuge for disabled ships, and they are equally good as places of departure for refitted squadrons ; they are controlled by the Admiralty ; and as regards deep docks, basins, factories, and plant, they are, or shortly might be made, equal to what would be required of them during an active war. There is yet another essential for establishments which this

island should ever have ready, as the primary movers when she is required suddenly to arm. They must be kept vitalised by fitting complements of artificers, for their fullest powers cannot be speedily elicited by adding artificers not specially trained to naval dockyard work, even if such imperfectly-trained men could be at once found. It is therefore indispensable for the instruction of the men we must depend upon, that the dockyards during peace should undertake, in all but rare cases, the building, repairing, and fitting of our ships. Having a nucleus of highly-trained artificers, as many temporary hands may be added as can be advantageously employed.

Let us now consider the means and positions of private yards for fitting out and for sustaining fleets in a serviceable condition, with the least possible detention of the ships from active service. No one of them is an easy refuge for distressed ships from a probable scene of action, nor could ships refitted in any one of them readily resume positions in which they are most likely to be required. They are all approached by long channels, that are dangerous for crippled ships ; in them ships of war can be served only in turn with other customers ; and their docks and basins are far inferior to those of naval yards for ships of war. Moreover, the resources of private yards, considerable as they may be, are not "reserve" resources ; nor can they, at a "word of command," be transferred from one work to another. The power of each such yard is measured by the wants of its ordinary customers, and it is commonly fully occupied with work which it is bound to complete within a given time ; whereas in a Queen's yard, at a moment's notice, its whole strength may be applied to accomplish whatever may be the most urgent of the ever-varying requirements incidental to a state of war.

Undoubtedly the private yards

are important auxiliaries, and in material resources they should be to the Queen's yards what the men of the "Naval Reserve" are to the men of the Navy. To say that no intention of abolishing the dockyards exists, is very short of being a satisfactory reply. The temper of these establishments, and the scale upon which their skilled artificers are maintained, essentially affect our power of dealing with any threat of war. The arsenals of France confront at short distances the vital parts of our coast, and flank the English and Irish Channels. This fact, and the knowledge of the consummate warlike energy of the French, make it evident that our arsenals should be so maintained that, when needful, work may be accomplished in them with unsurpassable celerity. As a matter of economy, no less than of national safety, the power to command this celerity of work is of exceeding importance. It enables a fleet to perform an amount of service which would otherwise require a much larger fleet. Indeed ships detained in port for repairs, when they are wanted at sea, are less useful than blockaded ships, for these at least detain an equal force of the enemy to watch them.

Even if, in the qualities of gallantry, seamanship, gunnery, and discipline, we were matchless, still while our enemies can equip and refit fleets more rapidly, and therefore have their services more constantly, we cannot command the seas. Let England, depending for food and revenue upon sea-borne commerce, remember that, for her, blockaded ports would represent famine, pestilence, and bankruptcy. If her whole population were under arms, and directed by a Wellington, it would be of no avail; for under the supposed conditions she would be strangled by an enemy she cannot reach.

The full cost of the reckless reduction in the dockyards cannot be

now estimated. It may be known after some experience of an unlooked-for war, during which we shall have been subjected to extortionate prices, paid by money borrowed at extravagant interest. Probably in that day disgrace and disaster may quicken our apprehension as to the magnitude of the crime which is committed by inadequately preparing for the expansion of our national forces. We have had marvellous instances in this country of a reckless disregard of preparation, and of the penalties we have endured in purse and in reputation as consequences of our neglect.

The disgraceful impotence we exhibited at the commencement of the Russian war made us the laughing-stock of the world. And it might have been presumed that the penalties we then endured in loss of life, treasure, and reputation, and in dismay, would have been an indelible warning for the future. Although then dealing with an enemy unable to cope at sea with the combined fleets of France and Great Britain, our naval resources were taxed to the utmost. Had France and Russia united against us, the consequences would inevitably have been very disastrous. Considered merely in a pecuniary point of view, the panics which have resulted from apprehended war, by affecting commerce and the Funds, and the preparation for actual war under the extravagant conditions inevitably attendant upon an armament, have cost more by millions than would have been paid for maintaining during peace the proper nucleus of a war establishment.

On the other hand, we may point to instances of vast expenditures of life and treasure having been avoided by possessing the means of promptly arming. Take, for example, the wonderful rapidity with which the fleet was fitted out on the occasion of the Spanish armament in 1790. It inspired the people of Great Britain with confidence;

whilst the Continental nations—which secretly encouraged the aggressions of Spain towards us—were filled with dismay. France, ostensibly neutral, had commenced an extensive armament, under pretext of guarding her own interests, but in reality to support Spain. When, however, it was seen how Great Britain was prepared to crush any efforts made against her, the threat of war ceased. And it is well known what weight the prompt and formidable manifestation of the naval strength of Britain gave to Lord St Helens, our Minister at Madrid, in his demands for the restitution of the places seized by Spain, and in dictating the apology to be offered to the British nation. The armament of the following year produced a similar result. At that time Great Britain held the highest rank among nations, on account of the rapidity, often experienced, with which she could bring her fleet into activity. But what now is the comparative weight of a British Minister at any capital in Europe or America?

The First Lord of the Admiralty, in his reply to "friendly" questions, has failed to free himself from the reproach of having improperly discharged 1361 workmen, and thereby inflicted an unnecessary calamity upon them and their families; and from a charge also of having committed a gross political blunder, by the reduction he has made in the aggregate strength of the dockyards. No doubt previous Governments had determined that Woolwich Dockyard should at a proper time be closed; but this measure was not intended to be carried into effect until the basins and factories at Chatham were much further advanced than they are. We have now parted with Woolwich, while Chatham yard is unequal to what would be required from it in the event of an armament, and especially in the event of a North Sea war, in which the formidable and newly-created Ger-

man navy would take a part. Seeing that we exist by naval supremacy, is it not amazing that whilst this foreign maritime power is being developed close to our eastern coast, we should reduce our means of conducting a North Sea war? To talk of our present satisfactory relations with Prussia as any justification of inertness with regard to permanent preparation, is absurd. Are not her relations with Russia satisfactory? It is a maxim of international policy at least to consider friends as possible enemies, and the maxim is as sedulously obeyed by Prussia in her naval as it has been in her military affairs, with so remarkable a proof of wisdom.

Ten years ago the German desire for a fleet was derided in England. Nevertheless the desire has, within that short period, advanced so far towards accomplishment, that instead of being a subject of derision, the German fleet must be an element in the political considerations of the future, that may exceedingly perplex British statesmen. The efforts of Prussia to become a great naval power cannot be concealed. She has already formed a considerable fleet of modern construction, and her capabilities for equipping ships are rapidly increasing; whilst by her recent conquests and vast extension of coasts, she possesses Baltic and North Sea harbours. And let it be remembered that in her commercial marine, Confederate North Germany has an ample nursery for seamen.

Her means, therefore, of creating and sustaining a navy, are commensurate with her maritime ambition. To what purpose may she apply this prodigious power? The canal which is on the eve of being constructed between the Baltic and the North Sea will enable Prussia to move her fleet from the one sea to the other without the risk of a dangerous navigation, and without encountering strong works and torpedoed in the Sound and Belt.

It is evident, from a consideration of her warlike means and resources, and from her strategic position, that she must soon have an exceeding influence over the destinies of Europe, and over our own destiny in particular. And concurrently with the progress of the Prussian canal, the military railways of Russia will be in course of rapid construction ; so that, by a combination of these Powers, an overwhelming naval and military force might be launched against unprepared England, and be sustained from a base very near to our coasts. Thus the attitude she is assuming may threaten the safety of England, and the Government may prove to have committed a grievous error in discarding Woolwich whilst Chatham Dockyard is yet incomplete. Instead of the artificers being discharged, they should have been employed to make good any deficiency in the fleet, which it is highly improvident to allow to exist. Looking to the strength of foreign navies, it is obvious that we are right in adding to our force of those heavily armed and armoured ships, which for the future must do the *pounding* work that has hitherto been done by ships of the line. By them we must preserve our supremacy at sea, but they are not fit for cruisers. Unfortunately we are nearly destitute of ships of this class ; and without cruisers of great speed, a contemptible Central American State may commit such ravages upon our commercial marine as that of the Northern American States suffered in their late war by the depredations of the swift Confederate cruisers. This want is especially to be heeded, since the late American war has shown how easily a belligerent without ships can be provided with them ; and since also a desire exists on the part of America to retort upon us our imputed complicity with the inflections she suffered. To this retort we shall be exposed sooner or later, by persistence in the false economy of the Admiralty. Yet the

men wanted in the dockyards for this important work were discharged, to add to the crowd of starving mechanics in our streets ; and Government timber, with which the needed ships ought to have been built, was sold at a loss in a glutted market. Mr Childers retorts upon his predecessors the charge of having improperly reduced the artificers by asserting that they had discharged many others before he came into office. He is, however, convicted by his own defence. That his predecessors had recently reduced the artificers should have been a caution to him to be exceedingly circumspect before he made further reductions, instead of being a lure to him to pass the limit which others, willing to make all safe reductions, had drawn. If he were justified by the reduction made by his predecessors, so his successors might be justified in making still further reductions. And so the country suffers by the importunity for office.

There has been an intention to abolish the office of Naval Superintendents of Dockyards, and this mischievous project may be revived. Should it be carried into effect in the great outfitting ports, the link will be wanting which has hitherto connected the dockyards with the fleet, and by means of which the incessant business in which both must co-operate has been so advantageously conducted. The result will be, that when some considerable pressure of work is thrust upon the dockyards, they will be in a state of utter confusion and insubordination. The Government expectations of progress in the work will on some emergency be disappointed, and the blame which should rest upon mischievous administrators will be heaped upon those who are the unhappy executives in disorganised departments. Whilst work is hindered, and time lost in accusations mutually bandied between a frightened Government and indignant officers struggling to expedite an armament

under an impracticable system, the enemy's fleet may be sweeping the Channel. The principle of having a naval chief in the dockyards had worked so well previously to Sir J. Graham's administration, and had produced such good results under the most trying conditions to which this country had ever been subjected, that he carried the principle still further, and for the Commissioner, who was a naval officer holding a civil office, he substituted a Superintendent, with his flag flying. The proposed scheme must have emanated from a brain wholly uninformed as to the necessities of the Service.

A very objectionable change has just been made in the dockyard administration, by abolishing the Storekeepers, and transferring their departments, as well as that of the Engineers, to the Master Shipwright. This will increase a previously-existing evil, for the Master Shipwright has been so much confined to his office that he could not sufficiently supervise the building and equipping of ships.

It is, moreover, fatal to the important principle (so essential for any effectual control of expenditure), that the person issuing stores ought not to be he who expends them. The Master Shipwright may henceforth charge stores to any work upon which he may be employed; and certainly the effect of this cannot be to furnish the House of Commons with more lucid or more reliable accounts.

It has been attempted to make official capital by contrasting the vigilance of the present Admiralty with the negligence of their predecessors. A keen desire to serve such a purpose was exhibited by the false colouring given to two cases of Admiralty subordinates having taken bribes. The attempt, however, failed to show that these dishonest men had, or could have

had, any influence prejudicial to the public interests. The fact is, they attempted to defraud a merchant, not the public, by leading him to believe they could cause his tender to be accepted. The crime of these two worthless men was that of obtaining money under false pretences. So far as integrity is concerned, the point to be remembered is, that in all cases of actual corruption, the contractor, if not primarily the corrupter, is a participator in the corruption.

When the dockyards and other establishments shall have been abolished or reduced to skeletons, there will be free commercial competition for Government orders. Let Mr Bright, the chief of the Board of Trade, and a representative commercial man, explain the principle upon which the country may thus be served. He has candidly informed us that infamous frauds were simply too often "ordinary effects of competition in trade."

From the time of the preposterous assumption of the command of a fleet by a Civil First Lord, defended by imputing jealousy to the admirals commanding the squadrons about to be combined, until the monstrous proposal to subject officers on half-pay to the "Discipline Act," the Admiralty have made a series of blunders which could not have occurred when the Civil First Lord had responsible professional advisers. More, no doubt, might easily be said, but enough has been advanced to show the danger to our Naval Service into which the country is drifting. However vain the hope may be that these observations will effect their purpose,* still the convictions of the writer prompt him to make an effort to avert the mischief that must result from a persistence in the course that has been inaugurated by the present Admiralty.

* The official experience of the writer entitles his opinions to great weight.—
ED. B. M.

THE PROBLEM SOLVED.

HOORAH ! we have found out the secret at last,
And our old Irish troubles are over and past :
We have solved the hard problem that proved so bewildering,
And discovered that Ireland's—a country of children !

Poor innocent babes ! they've been sadly misused :
We've indulged them in freedoms we should have refused.
What could we expect but a train of disasters,
When we suffered mere children to be their own masters ?

We've allowed them to bid and to bargain for farms ;
To vote at elections, and carry firearms ;
They've been suffered and summoned to sit upon juries,
And, of course, they have acted like fools or like furies.

In England we watch o'er the helpless and young,
To take care that their elders shall do them no wrong ;
But a much wider circuit our care must engage,
When a whole population is found under age.

All our plans must be changed : we must now take in hand
Every contract that's made about labour or land.
Every man that's removed, though with no right to stay,
Must be paid something handsome for going away.

Then as Ireland has long been a mere rabbit-warren,
And there's no way to make early marriages barren,
We must next, if the good of these minors is meant,
Forbid them to marry without our consent.

O Erin mavourneen ! och cushla mo chree !
First flower of the earth, and first gem of the sea !
With what Irish ideas your English abettors
Are now making you free by these newly-found fetters !

Note.—Is the way-going payment in question a revival of the old Celtic usage of *Deoch-an-dorais*—the *door-drink*, or stirrup-cup, that was due to every parting guest ?

LOTHAIR.

THIS is the most elaborate jest which the sportive author has ever played off upon an amiable and confiding public. Addressing the novel-reading portion of that public in his own mind, he has evidently said: "You have been this long while prating of purity of style, truth to nature, probability, and adherence to the rules of art. You have been condemning sensational novels, and false effects, and didactic prosings, and slipshod composition. Well, I will write something which shall be more extravagant than the romances of the 'London Journal,' more inflated in expression and false in grammar than the exercises of an aspiring schoolboy of the fifth form, more foreign to life and reality than the hysteric fancies of a convent-bred girl, and, in point of art, on a level with the drop-scene of a provincial theatre. My pictures of high life shall resemble the gin-inspired dreams of the assistant of some fashionable haberdasher, who enjoys glimpses of great houses and great people when he goes out with the goods. I will not even infuse any humour into this performance, the extravagance of which shall be only equalled by its dulness. And yet many of you who instruct others on questions of taste shall accept the book in all seriousness, while those who see through the jest will still be compelled to applaud its success. If the youngest son of any of my laudatory critics, at home for the holidays, had shown his father the composition in manuscript and confessed himself the author, the parent, in the righteous exercise of his authority, would have put the sheets promptly in the fire and lectured the young scribbler on his absurdity; and the

jest lies in the extorting the praise of these critics by putting the name of the Right Honourable B. Disraeli on the title-page. Many authors have taken foolish young men for their heroes, and have been censured accordingly; but I will not even take a foolish young man for mine—he shall not be a young man at all—I will get him direct from Madame Tussaud. My characters shall have that kind of resemblance to real people which distinguishes the portraits of embryo artists—a prominent feature only shall be like, or the portraiture of the cravats and coats of the sitters shall be faithful; or, failing even that slight exercise of art, I will affix such a name as shall at once suggest the original, and my readers, as they guess, shall be delighted with their own perspicacity. A great humorist once caricatured a work of mine, but I will out-Codlingsby Codlingsby. The public thinks itself knowing; so do the bumpkins at a fair who grin applause on the jackpudding, and, as I shall show, with equal reason." And this sardonic pleasantry has been amply justified by the result. The shaking of the cap-and-bells has been watched with all the gravity due to Jupiter's nod.

It is evident that a work constructed on this plan need not demand much invention, and that old materials will be as good as, or better than, new. When, therefore, it appears that the wealth of the hero is unbounded; that he talks of building cathedrals with the savings of his minority; that his family seat is vaster and more gorgeous than the palace of Aladdin; that there are among his friends dukes possessing enormous wealth and in-

fluence, a pushing lady who makes up by tact for want of breeding, obscure adventurers who shake kingdoms, and a marvellous intriguing female who can do everything and rules everybody,—the reader, fancying he has seen something of all this well-worn finery before, will perhaps mutter under his breath, “Old clo’!” The costumes are of the chaste kind supplied to amateur actors by Messrs Nathan at so much per night; the jewellery, in splendour and taste, resembles the workmanship of the celebrated lapidaries of Birmingham.

Lothair, whose rank and parentage are carefully concealed throughout the book, but whose descent, at least on the mother’s side, is known to us (he being, as we have already said, the legitimate offspring of Madame Tussaud), comes on the stage some time before he attains the majority which will give the Legislature the advantage of his presence in the Upper House. We are all familiar with the satirical views of modern society, which represent men and women of all sorts and conditions as the abject adorers of wealth; but nothing more cynical has ever been achieved in this way than the description of the struggles of the leaders of society—beautiful women, statesmen, and dignitaries of rival priest-hoods—for the control of this young money-bag. “London,” we are told, “was at Lothair’s feet.” Like Mrs Jarley, he was the delight of the nobility and gentry. No ball, no dinner-party, is considered complete without the presence of the gilded youth. Potent, grave, and reverend signiors exercise the most astute diplomacy in approaching him, and gravely discuss with him the most momentous questions, displaying the deference, the cunning, and the perseverance which might be appropriate in gaining over some great potentate who carried the destinies of a nation in his pocket, but which seem ludicrously dispro-

portioned to their singularly feeble object. It is true that they talk terrible nonsense and terrible twaddle—still it appears to be the best they have; and their rivalry, though more decorous, is hardly more respectable, and much less amusing, than that of a crowd of Moors whom we once saw in Tangier tearing each other’s beards and pulling off each other’s turbans in a mad struggle for a fourpenny-piece which an English stranger had dropped from a balcony. Whether Lothair shall ultimately be labelled Protestant or Roman Catholic is absolutely represented to be a matter of considerable importance to others than himself; and there are some female Danæes of irreproachable morals, each of whom, it is evident, will have her young affections crushed and her soft heart broken if the golden shower should fall into any lap but hers. One of these disappointed fair ones, indeed, hides her anguish in a convent, unable to endure the hollow world when a rival is to have the prize. If the reader will only consider what chance any of the youths of his acquaintance just turned of twenty would have of obtaining all this homage on the score of his own unassisted merits, he will the better appreciate the stinging satire of the description of Lothair’s social successes.

The first volume is taken up with the appearance of most of the characters on the stage, and the plan is adopted (which we do not, however, recommend to less experienced authors) of devoting one chapter or more to each separate group, without regard to the insignificant fact that they are scarcely more connected with each other than the different shoots in an asparagus-bed. First Lothair visits the ducal seat of Brentham, the owner of which suffered to a degree unusually severe from the *embarras de richesses* :—

“His Grace was accustomed to say that he had only one misfortune, and it

was a great one; he had no home. His family had married so many heiresses, and he consequently possessed so many halls and castles, at all of which, periodically, he wished, from a right feeling, to reside, that there was no sacred spot identified with his life in which his heart, in the bustle and tumult of existence, could take refuge."

His metropolitan mansion was on the same magnificent scale. "The Duke was one of the few gentlemen in London who lived in a palace." This fortunate peer had several daughters, each more beautiful than the other. Two of these are married, and one son-in-law, St Aldegonde, not yet a duke, but a duke's heir, and evidently a great favourite with the author, is an execrable ruffian, as we shall see, who would never have been tolerated for an hour in any decent house, but whose brutal eccentricities are detailed with affectionate approbation. This patrician is humoured to such a degree by his wife, that we are told, "when he cried for the moon it was promised him immediately." He smokes "Manilla cheroots of enormous length;" but the other son-in-law, Lord Montairy, was differently minded, for of him it is recorded that "he was so distractedly fond of Lady Montairy that he would only smoke cigarettes," and the domesticity of his tastes is further evinced thus :—

"Lord Montairy was passionately devoted to croquet. He flattered himself that he was the most accomplished male performer existing. He would have thought absolutely the most accomplished, were it not for the unrivalled feats of Lady Montairy. She was the queen of croquet. Her sisters also used the mallet with admirable skill, but not like Georgina. Lord Montairy always looked forward to his summer croquet at Brentham. It was a great croquet family, the Brentham family; even listless Lord St Aldegonde would sometimes play, with a cigar never out of his mouth. They did not object to his smoking in the air. On the contrary, 'they rather liked it.'"

But the gem of the household is the youngest daughter, not at all original or amusing, or differing in any way from the ordinary silly young lady of slight novels, except in her name, which displays the author's invention and research to great advantage, for she is called Lady Corisande, and to all the beauty of her sisters she adds a refined expression peculiar to herself. What the father of these divinities was like we may partly guess from that remarkable nobleman's own estimate of himself and of them: "Every day when he looked into the glass, and gave the last touch to his consummate toilette, he offered his grateful thanks to Providence that his family was not unworthy of him."

The first time that Lothair hears Corisande sing, he thus accosts that siren :—

"'Your singing,' he said, 'is the finest thing I ever heard. I am so happy that I am not going to leave Brentham to-morrow. There is no place in the world that I think equal to Brentham.'

"'And I love it too, and no other place,' she replied; 'and I should be quite happy if I never left it.'"

Nor is this remarkable identity of tastes the only link between these innocent beings. "Lothair's vast inheritance was in many counties and in more than one kingdom. . . . Lothair was the possessor of as many palaces and castles as the Duke himself." A few more such proprietors, and all the rest of our county families would be forced to go into lodgings. Thus naturally fitted to be the Duke's son-in-law, Lothair signifies a wish to stand in that relation to the illustrious peer. The Duchess, however, to whom he imparts his desire, thinks he had better wait, and Lothair accepts the advice with exemplary docility. He had previously told her of his intention to build on his estates, as soon as he should be master of them, no less than two thousand cottages, a

number which, if collected in rows, would have made an average county town, and which thus attests the magnificence of Lothair's disposition.

All this time he has been surrounded by a highly Protestant atmosphere—indeed Lady Corisande is remarkable for nothing so much, next to her name, as for the stanchness of her Protestantism. But now another element comes into play, for we are introduced to Cardinal Grandison. This prelate, one of Lothair's guardians, is a highly-influential member of the Romish Church. He is very tall, extraordinarily thin, and entirely devoted to the interests of the Papacy; and being better acquainted than most people with the extent of his ward's worldly possessions, it naturally occurs to him that so rich a young man, with a cardinal for his guardian, ought, by a little judicious management, to be brought, along with his property, within the fold of the true Church. Accordingly the worthy ecclesiastic, in his very first interview with the hero, sets about this politic design, though the style of his conversation is so insupportably tedious that any ordinarily-constituted youth thus exposed to it would have fled the neighbourhood at all hazards, never returning during the Cardinal's lifetime. His uncommon thinness is fully accounted for by the manner in which we find him receiving an invitation to dinner: "I never eat and I never drink," said the Cardinal; "I am sorry to say I cannot"—a degree of involuntary abstemiousness which must have been very convenient and exemplary during fasts of the Church, and which renders any extreme of emaciation credible.

The next group we are introduced to is that which surrounds Mr and Mrs Putney Giles. Mr Giles is a solicitor, but, nevertheless, is not without claim to a place in the high society in which we find him, since we are assured that

"many of his clients were among the most distinguished personages of the realm." Mrs Giles is a lady with the weakness, not unfrequently depicted in novels, of desiring to get into a class higher than her own. Lothair dines with this pair, and we subjoin a short specimen of the table-talk. Somebody has mentioned the Gulf Stream:—

"And are you afraid of the Gulf Stream?" inquired Lothair of his calmer neighbour.

"I think we want more evidence of a change. The Vice-Chancellor and myself went down to a place we have near town on Saturday, where there is a very nice piece of water; indeed some people call it a lake; but it was quite frozen, and my boys wanted to skate, but that I would not permit."

"You believe in the Gulf Stream to that extent," said Lothair,—"no skating."

At this dinner Lothair encounters a very singular lady, who is destined to exercise great control over his fate. She is described as "a matron of not many summers." Her face strikes him, and he asks who she is. She is called Theodora, is married to a friend of Garibaldi, her birth is unknown, she speaks every language, is ultra-cosmopolitan, and "has invented a new religion." An introduction to her is offered by his informant, but that is reserved to be effected in a much more informal and impressive way than by a couple of bows in a drawing-room.

The next personages whose acquaintance we make are Lord and Lady St Jerome, "who resided in one of the noblest mansions of St James's Square." As the Duke's family represent the Protestant influence directed on the hero, so the St Jeromes throw their own weight and that of their family mansion into the Romanist scale. The lady was "the daughter of a Protestant house, but during a residence at Rome after her marriage, she had reverted to the ancient faith, which she professed with the enthusiastic convictions of a convert. . . . All

Lady St Jerome's family connections were persons of much fashion; . . . her saloons were always attended, and by 'nice people.' "Lothair dines at their noble mansion. "It was a lively dinner," we are told. "Lord St Jerome loved conversation, though he never conversed. 'There must be an audience,' he would say, 'and I am the audience.'" There was a Monsignore Berwick, who must have been a kind of ecclesiastical firework, for it seems that, when necessary, he "could sparkle with anecdote or blaze with repartee;" and

"all the chaplains *who abounded in this house* were men of bright abilities, not merely men of reading, but of the world, learned in the world's ways, and trained to govern mankind by the versatility of their sympathies. It was a dinner where there could not be two conversations going on, and where even the silent take their share in the talk by their sympathy."

Now it is unlucky that none of the conversation of this lively dinner is preserved. Mr Disraeli treats us only to a Barmecide's feast of wit. But the Monsignore subsequently indulges in such utterances as the following: "Before a few years have elapsed, every country in Europe will be atheistical except France. . . . Let Christendom give us her prayers for the next few years, and Pio Nono will become the most powerful monarch in Europe, perhaps the only one." After these specimens of the table-talk of this sagacious though desponding prelate, the reader will perhaps agree with us in doubting whether he could, in his most combustible moments, sparkle with anecdote or blaze with repartee; or whether, even with the assistance of the brilliant and abundant chaplains, his conversational abilities could have rendered the dinner in any degree more lively than if he had followed the judicious example of Lord St Jerome. However, Lothair is of a nature to be easily satisfied in the matter of wit, and is much im-

pressed by his new acquaintances; nevertheless, even with the enthusiastic hostess, the silently appreciative host, the sparkling and blazing Monsignore, and the abundant chaplains, there is still an influence wanting to balance that of Lady Corisande, and that is supplied by Lord St Jerome's niece, Miss Arundel, who is graphically and powerfully described as "a beautiful young lady," and the sole object of whose bright existence is to further the interests of the Papacy. Her cheerful frame of mind is thus exhibited:—

"One day he ventured to express to Miss Arundel a somewhat hopeful view of the future, but Miss Arundel shook her head.

"'I do not agree with my aunt, at least as regards this country,' said Miss Arundel; 'I think our sins are too great. We left His Church, and God is now leaving us.'"

The atmosphere of high life in which we have been revelling now suddenly changes for that of an obscure coffee-room, frequented by shabby foreigners in London. The waiter, described as "ever-vigilant," is addressed by a mysterious person, who is known as the General, and who demands to see the landlord, by whom he is obsequiously received, and conducted to a room filled with conspirators, including a Head-Centre: "The Standing Committee of the Holy Alliance of Peoples all rose" (superfluous, it may be thought, in a standing committee), "although they were extreme Republicans, when the General entered. Such is the magical influence of a man of action over men of the pen and tongue." Nothing comes, however, of this formidable meeting—the talk of the men of the tongue being quite as trivial and absurd as if they had all been monsignores and cardinals; and it is rather a relief to get back from the seedy and stupid scoundrels to the peerage and baronetage at Vauxe, the family seat of the St Jeromes. Lothair arrives

there just in the nick of time, when some fascinating Popish ceremonies, called "Tenebræ," are in progress. The ingenuous youth is easily induced to assist at these, and a profound impression is produced on him, when, at the end of the last of them, as he rose, "Miss Arundel passed him with streaming eyes." At a picnic next day the hostess is more charming than ever: "Never was such gay and graceful hospitality. Lothair was quite fascinated as she thrust a paper of lobster-sandwiches into his hand, and enjoined Monsignore Catesby to fill his tumbler with chablis." Thus fed and fascinated, and exposed to the spells of Miss Arundel while revelling on lobster-sandwiches, the Protestantism of Lothair is evidently in imminent danger; and this is presently increased by the arrival of the Cardinal, who is thus welcomed: "His Eminence was received with much ceremony. The marshalled household, ranged in lines, fell on their knees at his approach; and Lady St Jerome, Miss Arundel, and some other ladies scarcely less choice and fair, with the lowest obeisance, touched, with their honoured lips, his princely hand."

The Cardinal, the hostess, and the beautiful young lady, now all concentrate their efforts on the proselytising of Lothair. Of Miss Arundel we learn that "in her society every day he took a strange and deeper interest:"—

"I wonder what will be her lot," he exclaimed.

"It seems to me to be settled," said Father Coleman. "She will be the bride of the Church."

"Indeed!" and he started, and even changed colour.

"She deems it her vocation," said Father Coleman.

"And yet, with such gifts, to be immured in a convent," said Lothair.

"That would not necessarily follow," replied Father Coleman. "Miss Arundel may occupy a position in which she may exercise much influence for the great cause which absorbs her being."

"There is a divine energy about her," said Lothair, almost speaking to himself. "It could not have been given for little ends."

"If Miss Arundel could meet with a spirit as exalted and as energetic as her own," said Father Coleman, "her fate might be different. She has no thoughts which are not great, and no purposes which are not sublime. But for the companion of her life she would require no less than a Godfrey de Bouillon."

But his speculations were not all confined to the lot of Miss Arundel, for "Lothair began to meditate on two great ideas—the reconciliation of Christendom, and the influence of architecture on religion." Whether the former of these great ideas was to be accomplished, according to the previsions of Monsignore Berwick, by the union of all nations under the sovereignty of Pio Nono (whose longevity will in that case be miraculous), we are not informed; but Lothair sets about the latter at once in the most practical manner, by resolving to devote £200,000 to the building of a cathedral, instead of to the construction of cottages, and causes an architect to make plans for the purpose. These designs are sent to him in a style totally different from that which would have sufficed for an ordinary commoner:—

"The door opened, and servants came in bearing a large and magnificent portfolio. It was of morocco and of prelatial purple, with broad bands of gold and alternate ornaments of a cross and a coronet. A servant handed to Lothair a letter, which enclosed the key that opened its lock. The portfolio contained the plans and drawings of the cathedral."

Whether this cathedral would be Anglican or Romish, Lothair did not know himself. It depended a good deal on the comparative warmth and influence of the smiles of Miss Arundel and of Lady Corisande. But just now "it seemed to Lothair that nothing could interest him in life that was not symbolical of divine truths and an

adumbration of the celestial hereafter." On the one hand, he was fortified "by a conviction of the apostolical succession of the English bishops, which no Act of Parliament could alter or affect." But on the other, he "was haunted by a feeling that the relations of his communion with the Blessed Virgin were not satisfactory," and in fact seems to have been a bore and prig of very singular promise.

"To whom is your cathedral to be inscribed?" asks Miss Clare Arundel.

"To a saint in heaven and in earth," said Lothair, blushing; "to St Clare."

After this we learn that "he was meditating if he should say more."

Before quitting Vauze we will quote two of the most important facts concerning the establishment there. One is, that after dinner the nobility and gentry "left the room with the ladies, in the Continental manner." The other is, that "it was the sacred hour of two when Lothair arrived, and they were summoned to luncheon almost immediately"—though why the hour of two should be sacred we know no more than Mr Disraeli. We will also give a short specimen of the conversation that prevailed, both as illustrating the manners of high life, and as relieving Lord St Jerome from the stigma of being unable to converse :—

"These are for you, dear uncle," said Clare Arundel, as she gave him a rich cluster of violets. "Just now the woods are more fragrant than the gardens, and these are the produce of our morning walk. I could have brought you some primroses, but I do not like to mix violets with anything."

"They say primroses make a capital salad," said Lord St Jerome.

"Barbarian!" exclaimed Lady St Jerome. "I see you want luncheon; it must be ready;" and she took Lothair's arm. "I will show you a portrait of one of your ancestors," she said; "he married an Arundel."

Evidently it is now high time for the Protestant faction to interfere,

VOL. CVIL—NO. DCLVI.

unless they wish Lothair to go straight to Rome and kiss the Pope's toe. Accordingly he is hurried away to the Duke's house in London. Lady Corisande has just been presented. "From the moment her fair cheek was sealed by the gracious approbation of Majesty, all the critics of the Court at once recognised her as the Cynosure of the Empyrean."

In describing a dinner-party at the Duke's, at which a Lord Carisbrooke was present, "a young man of distinguished air and appearance," the author, accustomed as we are to his eccentricities, nevertheless greatly startled us by the abrupt announcement that "Lord Carisbrooke was breeding." He was only breeding horses, however. Afterwards there was a ball, at which poor Miss Arundel, with nothing but the odour of sanctity to make her agreeable, stood a very poor chance with the Cynosure of the Empyrean, bearing the seal of majesty on her cheek: "A prince of the blood was dancing with Lady Corisande. Lothair was there *vis-à-vis* with Miss Arundel. . . . Lothair had to advance and meet Lady Corisande. Her approaching mien was full of grace and majesty." We should think so, considering what was on her cheek. We have often heard from young men addicted to slang phraseology that the most remarkable feature of the girls of the rising generation is their "cheek," but all must yield in this particular to the Lady Corisande. As incidental bits of high life, we may note that they had dined "in the Chinese saloon" (we hope on birds'-nest soup and puppy-dog pie), and that the supper was conducted in this way :—

"Royalty, followed by the imperial presence of ambassadors, and escorted by a group of dazzling duchesses and paladins of high degree, was ushered with courteous pomp by the host and hostess into a choice saloon, hung with rose-coloured tapestry and illumined by chandeliers of crystal, where they were

served from gold plate. But the thousand less favoured were not badly off, when they found themselves in the more capacious chambers, into which they rushed with an eagerness hardly in keeping with the splendid nonchalance of the preceding hours.

"'What a perfect family!' exclaimed Hugo Bohun, as he extracted a couple of fat little birds from their bed of aspic jelly. 'Everything they do in such perfect taste. How safe you were here to have ortolans for supper!'

"All the little round tables, though their number was infinite, were full. Male groups hung about; some in attendance on fair dames, some foraging for themselves, some thoughtful and more patient and awaiting a satisfactory future. Never was such an elegant clatter."

Lothair now resolves to return to Oxford (where he had before entered the University, and where he had a considerable establishment of horses). Driving out his drag, he finds in the road a lady with a broken-down carriage. This was Theodora. Lothair gallantly offers assistance, and Theodora, while thanking him, introduces him to her husband, Colonel Campian, a Southern American. Lothair sends them home in his drag, which was drawn by a remarkable team. "They were four roans highly bred, with black manes and tails. They had the Arab eye, with arched necks, and seemed proud of themselves and their master." The grateful Campians invite Lothair to dinner. The lady's attractions are thus described: "The countenance was Olympian; a Phidian face, with large grey eyes and dark lashes; wonderful hair, abounding without art, and gathered together by Grecian fillets." Next day they all go to Blenheim; the weather is beautiful, the scene enchanting, the Colonel the most accommodating of men; and the naughty hero, who, before he is of age, has proposed for one girl, and been on the extreme verge of proposing for another, now makes ardent love to the lady with the Olympian countenance and Phidian face. Even

the most rigid moralists will, however, be disposed to excuse his passion, in consideration of the mental as well as personal attractions of the lady. Here are a few sentiments selected at hazard from her conversation:—

"'I live only for climate and the affections.'

"'I am a great foe to dinners, and indeed to all meals. I think when the good time comes we shall give up eating in public, except, perhaps, fruit, on a green bank, with music.'

"'Railways have elevated and softened the lot of man.'

"'I require in all things sympathy.'"

Evidently to know such a woman was to love her. Lothair returns to London, but the visit to Blenheim had quite untuned him for the society of people who live for other objects than climate and the affections. He is engaged to dine with the Montairys, but he unscrupulously resolves to throw them over. It is fortunate that he does, for fate leads him into much less commonplace company. He calls a cab, and as he gets into it, naturally remarks, as any other young man would, "'Tis the gondola of London;" just as, when in Venice, he probably remarks of the gondola, "'Tis the hansom of the Adriatic." The judicious order which he gives to the cabman is, "Drive on till I tell you to stop." He is driven about, accordingly, as passengers so often are, at the pleasure of the cabman, till, in some unknown suburb, a procession in the road arrests the progress of the vehicle. Lothair gets out, and being probably confused as to fares by the new cab regulations, and being, moreover, as we know, the weakest of young men, gives the driver a sovereign. The cabman thereupon, "staring with delight at the sovereign in his astonished palm," promptly and inevitably recognises in him "a real gentleman," and in gratitude tells him that the procession is on its way to a Fenian meeting, that he has a ticket of ad-

mission, and that he will transfer that ticket to Lothair. Thus, by the most natural sequence of events in the world, Lothair, instead of dining with the Montairys, attends a Fenian meeting. The reason why he is taken there by the author is that he may make the acquaintance of the conspirator known as the General. When the hat is taken round, as is customary at Fenian meetings, Lothair declines to contribute, possibly because he had given all his money to the cabman. He is thereupon denounced as a non-subscriber, and consequently a spy; and the aggrieved Fenians are about to set upon him, when the General interposes, threatens two or three hundred of the assailants with his pistol, gives his name privately to the leader of the Fenian Lodge, on whom it acts like a talisman; and after seeing Lothair safely out of this "lodge in some vast wilderness," declines to receive any thanks, or even to reveal his name. We need hardly say that the General is a friend of Theodora, and that he gives that wonderful woman in politics what she requires in all things—namely, sympathy.

Next day, Lothair, after winning the prize at a pigeon-match, goes to dine with a Mr Brancepeth, an unhappy person, whose life is spent in giving exquisite dinners to people of distinction, and who "had attained the highest celebrity in his peculiar career." "Royalty," we are told, "had consecrated his banquets"—no wonder that "to dine with Mr Brancepeth was a social incident that was mentioned." However, we should not have paused over Mr Brancepeth's banquet if it had not happened to illustrate the refined and pleasing manners of St Aldegonde, who is intended by the author for an agreeable character, calculated to leave a pleasing impression on the reader. That nobleman, when riding with Mr Brancepeth in the morning, had politely mentioned, "as was his general

custom with his companions, that he was bored to very extinction." Mr Brancepeth resents the imputation of being a bore so little that he takes great pains to get the courteous speaker to dine with him. One Pinto, for whom St Aldegonde has a depraved admiration, is a guest at this dinner, and during the meal the noble lord, "with his back turned to his other neighbour, hung upon the accents of Mr Pinto." But all this time he ate nothing, which naturally distressed his host.

"He did not care so much for his occasionally leaning on the table with both his elbows, but that he should pass by every dish was distressing. So Mr Brancepeth whispered to his own valet—a fine gentleman, who stood by his master's chair and attended on no one else, except, when requisite, his master's immediate neighbour—and desired him to suggest to St Aldegonde whether the side table might not provide, under the difficulties, some sustenance. St Aldegonde seemed quite gratified by the attention, and said he should like to have some cold meat. Now that was the only thing the side table, bounteous as was its disposition, could not provide. All the joints of the season were named in vain, and pies and preparations of many climes. But nothing would satisfy St Aldegonde but cold meat."

Then Lothair goes to a ball given for Miss Arundel, where "he yielded to the magic of the flowing hour. . . . As he fed her with cates as delicate as her lips, and manufactured for her dainty beverages which would not outrage their purity, Lothair at last could not refrain from intimating his sense of her unusual but charming joyousness." After this remarkable union of cates and compliments, and ere the flowing hour was well stagnant, we are sorry to have to record that when he jumped into his brougham at break of day, he exclaimed, "Thank heavens, it is at last Friday!" and the reason why he thanked heavens that it was Friday was, that on that day he, Lothario Lothair, was going to visit Mrs Campian of the Olympian countenance at her coun-

try seat of Belmont. He rode thither upon "a dark chestnut barb, which, proud of its resplendent form, curveted with joy when it reached a green common." Belmont was "a stately mansion of hewn stone, with wings, and a portico of Corinthian columns," and consequently was in complete harmony with the inmate's countenance and face. Here Lothair meets an artist with the commonplace name of Mr Gaston Phœbus, who it seems was "the most successful, not to say the most eminent, painter of the age." It will be interesting to artists, therefore, to read the following exposition of the principles on which the illustrious painter worked, and we wish they may understand them better than we do:—

"'ARYAN principles,' said Mr Phœbus; 'not merely the study of nature, but of beautiful nature; the art of design in a country inhabited by a first-rate race, and where the laws, the manners, the customs, are calculated to maintain the health and beauty of a first-rate race. In a greater or less degree, these conditions obtained from the age of Pericles to the age of Hadrian in pure Aryan communities, but Semitism began then to prevail, and ultimately triumphed. Semitism has destroyed art; it taught man to despise his own body, and the essence of art is to honour the human frame.'

"'I am afraid I ought not to talk about such things,' said Lothair; 'but if by Semitism you mean religion, surely the Italian painters inspired by Semitism did something.'

"'Great things,' said Mr Phœbus; 'some of the greatest. Semitism gave them subjects, but the Renaissance gave them Aryan art, and it gave that art to a purely Aryan race. But Semitism rallied in the shape of the Reformation, and swept all away. When Leo the Tenth was Pope, Popery was pagan; Popery is now Christian and art is extinct.'

Unluckily we are unable to throw any light whatever on the foregoing passage, and all that we have been able to understand of Mr Phœbus's utterances (and for which we greatly commend him) is, that he expresses high admiration of Mr Story's

statues. He concludes his oracles in this way, "But nothing can be done until the Aryan races are extricated from Semitism;" notwithstanding which, and many similar remarks, and although he has friends who ought to have taken care of him, he is suffered to go at large all through the book. We shudder to think that the unhappy gentleman may be still at liberty, and that we might chance to meet him without a keeper. After listening to all this, it is no wonder that "Lothair returned to town in a not altogether satisfactory state of mind." He went to the opera, where he saw Mr Gaston Phœbus in Mrs Campian's box, and grew jealous of them. "After that he had no real sleep, but a sort of occasional and feverish doze with intervals of infinite distress, waking always to a consciousness of inexpressible mortification and despair." In the morning after this troubled night he is naturally late abed, and several emissaries from the Cardinal call upon him before he is up. The Cardinal is about to inaugurate a great ecclesiastical function for the restoration of Christendom, and is of course anxious to obtain for this simple and intelligible design the valuable support of Lothair, who has indeed almost promised to attend. But in his present humour these ideas are distasteful to him—he is occupied with his jealousy of Mrs Campian—besides,

"he could not bring himself without a pang to contemplate a secession from the Church of his fathers. He took refuge in the wild but beautiful thought of a reconciliation between Rome and England. If the consecration of the whole of his fortune to that end could assist in effecting the purpose, he would cheerfully make the sacrifice. He would then go on a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre, and probably conclude his days in a hermitage on Mount Athos."

He falls into a reverie in an easy-chair, "with a hair-brush in each hand," and possibly a tooth-brush

in his mouth, in which attitude he would have made an excellent study for a portrait, to be painted on Aryan principles by Mr Gaston Phœbus. To him, thus seated, the Monsignore enters, and presses him hard to attend the function for the restoration of Christendom. But what with this grand design on the one hand, and the recollection of Mrs Campian's Olympian countenance on the other, the poor young nobleman, pacing the room with his eyes on the ground, is reduced to exclaim, "I wish I had been born in the middle ages, or on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, or in some other planet; anywhere, or at any time, but in this country and in this age!"

"That thought is not worthy of you, my Lord," said Catesby. Catesby was wrong, however; it was an idiotic thought, idiotically expressed, and quite worthy of the speaker. The Monsignore being still urgent, Lothair gives him to believe that he will attend the function; and using the freedom that gentlemen are entitled to employ in their intercourse with prelates of high degree, desires him to order his (Lothair's) brougham for eight that evening—the hour when he is invited to accompany the Cardinal. His visitor gone, he remained in a most troubled state all the morning, "and often he sighed." We are glad to find, however, that at 5.30 P.M. he was able to take some breakfast, consisting of a little soup, a cutlet, and a glass or two of claret. At eight he started as from a dream, —classically exclaimed, "*Jacta est alea!*"—which is much finer than saying "the die is cast"—and, false alike to the Cardinal, the Monsignore, and his obligations to Christendom, ordered the brougham to drive—to Belmont!

At this joyous mansion a *fête*, as usual, was in progress, and many people of the highest consideration were assembled. In deference, perhaps, to the sad disorder of Mr

Gaston Phœbus, whose lunacy was of a character that did not admit of any lucid intervals, the conversation was in the Aryan-Semitic key. The supper, in anticipation of the good time expected by Mrs Campian, consisted of fruit on a green bank, with music. Mrs Gaston Phœbus, described as of extraordinary beauty and voluptuous symmetry, played the piano. Among the company there was also a sister of Mrs Phœbus, whose simple name was Euphrosyne Cantacuzene, and whose agreeable expression of face was mockery mingled with Ionian splendour; there was also a Princess of Tivoli, and a maniac of the name of Gozelius, invited perhaps as an appropriate companion for Mr Gaston Phœbus. Dr Forbes Winslow was probably in attendance somewhere about the grounds, though the author does not mention him. At the end of the evening, Lothair, whose intellect and powers of reflection had no doubt been stimulated by the mental atmosphere around him, exclaimed, as he threw himself into his brougham, "I perceive that life is not so simple an affair as I once supposed;" which profound discovery almost reconciles us to the postponement of the restoration of Christendom.

All this time we have been engaged with the first only of the three volumes. But lest the justly-alarmed reader should suppose that we are going to enter at equal length into the other two, we will at once assuage his fears by explaining that our future extracts and comments will be much less copious,—first, because Mr Disraeli has put most of his plums into the earlier portion of his pudding, while the remainder is composed chiefly of very indigestible dough; and secondly, because all the chief movers of the plot, except the Fenians and the cabman, are now brought together, and may therefore be compendiously dealt with. But first we must note two circum-

stances which preceded the assemblage of the characters. The one is, that Lothair purchased from a jeweller of the name of Mr Ruby, for four thousand pounds, a rope of (not onions, but) pearls, worthy to be worn by the Queen of Cyprus, and formerly owned by the Doge of Venice, which he sent anonymously to the divine Theodora; and that lady, in provoking ignorance of the donor, sealed them up and confided them to the care of the discomfited Lothair. The other is, that the hero pays a visit to Mr Gaston Phœbus at his own abode. "His residence," we are told, "was convenient and agreeable, and in situation not unlike that of Belmont, being sylvan and sequestered"—in fact, to impart a secret to the reader, it was not far from Colney-Hatch. The occasion of the visit was the exhibition of a picture which the gifted, though unhappily insane, artist had painted expressly for the Emperor of Russia. The guests were received by Mrs Phœbus and her sister Euphrosyne Cantacuzene in a very singular costume, which is, unfortunately, only vaguely described: "'They are habited as sylvans,' the great artist deigned to observe, if any of his guests could not refrain from admiring the dresses which he had himself devised." What kind of vestment was likely to be devised in the brain of Mr Phœbus we must leave to the more or less sane imagination of the reader; but the hint about sylvans justifies us in concluding that it consisted mainly of leaves, though we believe that it was partly composed of flowers also, since it is recorded that Mrs Phœbus presented a venerable patron of art in Britain, who was one of the guests, with a beautiful flower, which probably formed an important part of her dress. The subject of Mr Phœbus's picture was not entirely new, being "Hero and Leander;" but we are assured that it was "touched by the hand of a master who had never failed,"

and that "the applause was a genuine verdict." We trust, therefore, that its absence from the Royal Academy has not been caused by the imprudent rejection of the committee. Part of the guests remained to admire the picture, and Mr Phœbus, coming with the same object, stole upon them unawares. "His air was elate, and was redeemed only from arrogance by the intellect of his brow. 'Tomorrow,' he said, 'the critics will commence. You know who the critics are? The men who have failed in literature and art.'" Now the most notorious art-critic of the day is Mr Ruskin, and though many do call him quack, yet that is no reason why Mr Disraeli should deny his success. In literature the names of Macaulay, Sidney Smith, Wilson, and Lockhart, who were all critics, stand much higher than Mr Disraeli's. Yet the attempt to disarm the critics is ingenious, and, to judge from the reviews, successful—indeed we are ourselves an instance of its success; for though we had at first entertained an irreverent idea of making fun of 'Lothair,' we were so terrified at the thought of being branded as a man who had failed in literature, that in sheer consternation we have given a much more favourable idea of the work than it deserves.

The stage on which the characters are brought together is Muriel Towers, one of Lothair's many castles. On his first visit to the princely abode he was met by five hundred horsemen well mounted, and some of them gentlemen of high degree, who insisted on accompanying him to the gates, but who fortunately did not ask to come in. The whole household were arrayed, and arranged in groups on the steps of the chief entrance. A complete list of these is given, copied apparently from the county papers. The steward of the estates was "the leading spirit." There was a house-steward, a chief butler (the chief baker is

by an error of the press omitted), a head-gardener, a chief of the kitchen, a head-keeper, head-for-ester, and grooms of the stud and of the chambers. The coat of the groom of the chambers was made in Savile Row. They were all modestly drawn up behind the house-keeper, "a grave and distinguished-looking female" (in fact we have reason to believe that she was of noble though decayed family), and who "curtsied like the old court," though from what old court she had learnt her curtsies is not specified. There were also "half-a-dozen powdered gentlemen glowing in crimson liveries, who indicated the presence of my lord's footmen" (that is, who indicated their own presence), "while the rest of the household, considerable in numbers, were arranged in two groups, according to their sex, and at a respectful distance." Lothair was ushered into "his armoury," a gallery two hundred feet long; and was quite astonished, as well he might be, "with the number of courts and quadrangles in the castle, all of bright and fantastic architecture, and each of which was a garden glowing with brilliant colours, and gay with the voice of fountains or the forms of gorgeous birds."

There was one feature in this remarkable abode which deserves a separate paragraph. It was the tomb of Lothair's grandfather, situated in a large and lofty octagonal chamber. He had raised it in his lifetime. The tomb was of alabaster, surrounded by a railing of pure gold. We understand also (though the author omits to mention it) that the old gentleman's shroud was a magnificent piece of tapestry which had once belonged to the Queen of Sheba; and that his coffin was of mother-of-pearl with agate handles, and the name, age, and date of his lamented decease inscribed thereon in rows of sapphires and brilliants. May he rest in peace!—though we hardly expect it.

In this extraordinary mansion Lothair now assembled his friends, in order to celebrate his coming of age. With more hospitality than prudence he brought together all the ladies he had been making love to. The divine Theodora was there with a star on her brow, the Cynosure of the Empyrean with the seal of majesty on her cheek, and the fair Miss Arundel with her young heart palpitating with love for the venerable Pope. There were the St Jeromes and the Montairys, and the gentlemanly dog St Aldegonde with his adoring wife. There was Hugo Bohun, whose name is that of an ancient Crusader, but whose sentiments are of the feeblest kind. Carisbrooke had also left off breeding to come, and a bishop with his chaplain and a trusty archdeacon had been invited to meet the Cardinal and the Monsignores. The mysterious General arrived on a political mission to the divine Theodora. Lord Culloden had brought his two daughters, and there were Mr and Mrs Putney Giles, and some others whom Mr Disraeli mentions, as well as some whom he does not enumerate, including Codlingsby and Rafael Mendoza.

What took place while this illustrious gathering lasted may be briefly described. There was a succession of the most brilliant entertainments. The Bishop was particularly playful, and is said to have showed relentless gaiety in tumbling over the Monsignores, though we are not indulged with any specimen of the Episcopal humour. The divine Theodora developed some new peculiarities. She is described as having "an Athenian eye," and as both her eyes are subsequently characterised as "Hellenic," we are permitted to indulge the hope that both may have been Athenian. She is also strangely afflicted with "a tumult of the brow," which may perhaps have been the result of a *jeunesse orageuse*, since we learn that

at one period of her life she was in the habit of sleeping on door-steps in Paris with a tambourine for a pillow. St Aldegonde continued to behave with characteristic brutality. It is recorded that he prided himself when he did laugh, which was rare, on laughing loud. Wanting to speak to his wife, he sends a friend to fetch her thus: "'Hugo,' said St Aldegonde to Mr Bohun, 'I wish you would tell Bertha to come to me. I want her. She is talking to a lot of women at the other end of the room, and if I go to her I am afraid they will get hold of me.'" The same gentleman asking him if he were going to Church,

"St Aldegonde would not answer; he gave a snort and glanced at Hugo with the eye of a gladiator. . . . The Bishop was standing near the mantelpiece talking to the ladies, who were clustered round him; the Archdeacon and the Chaplain and some other clergy a little in the background; Lord St Aldegonde, who, whether there were a fire or not, always stood with his back to the fireplace with his hands in his pockets, moved discourteously among them, assumed his usual position, and listened, as it were grimly, for a few moments to their talk; then he suddenly exclaimed in a loud voice, and with the groan of a rebellious Titan, 'How I hate Sunday!'

"'Granville!' exclaimed Lady St Aldegonde, turning pale. There was a general shudder.

"'I mean in a country-house,' said Lord St Aldegonde. 'Of course I mean in a country-house. I do not dislike it when alone, and I do not dislike it in London. But Sunday in a country-house is infernal.'

"'I think it is now time for us to go,' said the Bishop, walking away with dignified reserve; and they all dispersed."

The feasts of every day at Muriel are faithfully chronicled. On one occasion the party was so considerable that they dined in the great hall, and "when it was announced to Lothair that his lordship's dinner was served, and he offered his arm to his destined companion, he looked around, and then, in an

audible voice and with a stateliness becoming such an incident, called upon the High Sheriff to lead the Duchess to the table." On the day when the illustrious host came of age he dined again "in his great hall with two hundred guests, at a banquet where all the resources of nature and art seemed called upon to contribute to its luxury and splendour." Then they embarked in fanciful barges and gondolas on a lake, in the centre of which was an island with a pavilion containing a repast of "coffee and ices and whimsical drinks," with music and magnificent fireworks. Mr Disraeli is as great in coloured fire as in theatrical upholstery; and the spectacle on the lake is so like the transformation-scene in a pantomime, that at the end of it we expected to find Lothair and the Duke reappearing as harlequins, Lady Corisande and Miss Arundel as columbines, and the Cardinal and the Bishop as rival pantaloons, while St Aldegonde would have made a capital clown.

All this time, however, much more serious business has been in progress. A war of mines and ambushes is waged by the Cardinal and Monsignores on one side, the Bishop, Chaplain, and Archdeacon on the other, for the right to control the spiritual interests of Lothair. In fact their intended prey led such a life of it that the moral is obvious—namely, if you are the heir to many castles and parks, do not invite a bishop and a cardinal together to assist you in celebrating the attainment of your majority. First the Monsignores tried to have the household drawn up to receive the Cardinal on their knees. Then they put a notice in the papers that Lothair was about to celebrate high mass. The Bishop retaliated by persuading Lothair to receive the sacrament in his own chapel on the morning of his birthday, in the most distinguished company; and a diocesan deputation, consisting of archdeacons and rural

deans, presented to him a richly-bound Bible and prayer-book on a cushion of velvet. No wonder that "the habitual pallor of the Cardinal's countenance became unusually wan," that "the cheek of Clare Arundel was a crimson flush," and "that Monsignore Catesby bit his lip," on witnessing this bold manœuvre of the wily Protestant champion. The ladies took part in the warfare with their accustomed zeal. Lady Corisande whispered in Lothair's ear that one of the happiest hours of her life was eight o'clock that morning. Clare Arundel, discomfited but not defeated, solemnly summoned him to meet her at Rome. And yet, after all Lothair's aspirations for one Church and the restoration of Christendom, and for more satisfactory relations with the Blessed Virgin, the Pagan influence, represented by the Olympian countenance and Athenian eye of the divine Theodora, prevails; and before the party at Muriel breaks up, he is so far from thinking of building cathedrals, that he thanks her for saving him from lavishing his money on "an ecclesiastical toy," and expresses his resolution to devote to her his fortune and his life.

The reader may perhaps think that Mrs Campian could not very well avail herself of this splendid offer, at any rate in the lifetime of the Colonel; but thereby hangs a great part of the tale. It is the profound conviction of many characters in the book that two powerful elements, whose antagonism will produce a moral earthquake, must shortly come into collision, and that one or other of them must ultimately prevail; and as one of these is Popery, and the other consists of secret societies of assassins and atheists, the prospects of the rest of the world are not cheering. All society, it seems, is honeycombed by the lodges of a villanous freemasonry, whose primary, but by no means ultimate, object is the destruction of the

Papacy. These amiable brotherhoods are distinguished by ridiculous names, as "Mary Anne" and "Madre Natura," and they are always plotting outbreaks which luckily very seldom take place. They constantly hold secret meetings—they have emissaries going about like so many Guy Fawkeses always ready with the dagger or the lucifer-match—they have passwords, and false names, and disguises, and dark-lanterns, and all the rest of the melodramatic machinery which has such an irresistible fascination for our author. This appalling picture has not been without its effect on the readers of 'Lothair'—indeed we know of one old lady who has been terribly frightened, and who never goes to bed now (especially after eating muffins with her tea) without dreaming that she is blown up by conspirators, or forcibly converted by the Pope. Well, the divine Theodora is not merely an agent of the secret societies, but has apparently given a name to one of them (for she is popularly known to the assassins and atheists as Mary Anne), and is a prime mover in all the plots which alarm the despots of Europe. When the General visited her at Muriel they were hatching the insurrectionary movement on Rome which ended at Mentone; and the enthusiastic young devotee who had been very near marrying Miss Arundel and building a Roman Catholic cathedral, is now enrolled among the Italian Republicans who are going to make war on the successor of St Peter. It is in this novel and unexpected situation that we find him when the scene shifts. He is now "Captain Muriel" of the Republican army assembled in the mountains near Viterbo, under the General whom we have before encountered, and who, it seems, is the most consummate soldier in Europe, though his illustrious name is never disclosed to us. As Lothair, besides serving

in the army, has contributed the two hundred thousand pounds with which he had intended to build a cathedral, towards the expenses of the campaign, it is not so surprising as it otherwise might be, that the consummate soldier confides all his plans unreservedly to the young recruit and admits him to all his councils. Colonel Campian was an old adherent of the cause, and it is not wonderful that he should hold a high position on the staff; but there is another old acquaintance in a position of trust whom we were not equally prepared to find there. The General's military secretary is—the divine Theodora! "She moved among them," says Mr Disraeli, "like the spirit of some other world"—which is the more surprising as he tells us "she was clothed in male attire," and we have never heard of any spirit-world the inhabitants of which are dressed in the uniform of military secretaries. One day the camp is visited by a lancer of the Royal Guard who has been sent to announce the arrest of Garibaldi. This he does by slowly lowering his tall weapon and offering the General the despatch which was fastened to the head of his spear. We hope this mode of delivering military messages will not become common, as an incautious or inebriated orderly might easily poke out a general's eye. Besides the information about Garibaldi, he also brings a private despatch to Theodora, containing the appalling intelligence that "the Mary Anne Societies are not strong enough for the situation, and that 'tis an affair of the Madre Natura." In order that the reader may appreciate the force of this announcement, a chapter is devoted to an account of the last-mentioned remarkable fraternity; but as it might have been written by Mr Gaston Phœbus in one of his worst paroxysms, we shall say nothing more about it. But by-and-by they hear worse and much more intelligible news, to the effect that the French troops are embarking to defend

Rome. This causes the divine Theodora to retire to her tent in great agony; her Hellenic eyes brim over with the Attic salt of her Castalian tears, till they run down her Phidian nose, and channel her Olympian cheeks. Nevertheless the Republicans resolve to advance and try to get into the city before the French. They find the enemy strongly posted—they make attacks which are repulsed—but the divine Theodora, a sword in one hand, the banner of the Republic in the other, rallies them, and the enemy is routed. At this moment a random shot strikes the heroine, who is borne by Lothair bleeding into Viterbo. At first she seems to be getting on pretty well, but the thunder of the guns, which tell that the French have disembarked, produces an unfavourable effect upon her mind and her wound. Colonel Campian—whose connubial relations with this admirable woman must have been a good deal interrupted in time of peace by her visits to the chiefs of the secret societies, and in war by her duties as a military secretary—comes to summon Lothair to her deathbed and then leaves them, apparently going away to enjoy a quiet cigar. Lothair addresses her as "Adored being"—she exacts from him a promise that he will never enter the Church of Rome. "And now," she said, "embrace me, for I wish that your spirit should be upon me as mine departs."

The scene now shifts to Rome, where we meet more old friends. Lady St Jerome looks after the spiritual interests of the Englishmen in the Papal army; and Miss Arundel, now the superior of a sisterhood of mercy, scrapes lint for the wounded soldiers. The battle of Mentone is fought, and the Republicans, in the absence of their military secretary, are defeated. A young man, severely wounded, is found in an ambulance; he is brought to Miss Arundel, and she recognises—Lothair.

The reader will perhaps wonder what sort of a reception the wounded Lothair may meet with from the Monsignores and Miss Arundel, after fighting against the Pope, under a general whose declared object it was to blow up St Peter's. Nothing could exceed the care and kindness of these charitable people, and they take advantage of his bodily weakness to renew their efforts for his conversion. But it is certainly puzzling to find that Miss Arundel calls this comrade of the assassins and atheists "the most favoured of men"—that Lady St Jerome receives him "with an expression of personal devotion which was distressing to him"—that "the Princess Tarpeia-Cinque Cento, the greatest lady in Rome, in whose veins, it was said, flowed both consular and pontifical blood of the rarest tint," tells him they will never forget what he had done for them—and that Monsignore Berwick, now a cardinal, hailed him "as his comrade in the great struggle." The astonishment of the reader would probably be complete (had Mr Disraeli's previous feats left in him any capacity for surprise) at finding that a grand service is given in the Jesuit Church of St George of Cappadocia, to celebrate Lothair's recovery, and that at its conclusion "many asked a blessing from Lothair, and some rushed forward to kiss the hem of his garment." The hero of these attentions is unable to account for them himself, till he reads in a Roman newspaper an account of the event, in which he is represented to have fought at Mentone on the side of the Pope, and to have been given up for lost, till Miss Arundel was directed by a most beautiful woman, who suddenly and mysteriously appeared to her, to go to a certain hospital where she would find a young Englishman in an ambulance; and that on doing as she was bid she found Lothair. The beautiful woman is variously represented to

be a tailor's wife and the Virgin Mary; but as she was proved to have had a halo round her head, and to have given to some children miraculous flowers, it is clear that no tailor could ever have pressed her to his bosom, and the alternative is inevitable. When Lothair represents the incorrectness of this version of the story to Cardinal Grandison, his Eminence calmly insinuates that he is still suffering from illness, and labours under an hallucination; and as Lothair is satisfied with this explanation we hope the reader will not be more exacting, and we recommend the incident and the explanation to the attention of Mr Burnand for his next burlesque. Not content with this remarkable achievement, the Cardinal, striking while the iron is hot, informs him that the very next day the Pope will, as a special favour, receive the bewildered hero into the bosom of the Church of which his Holiness is the divine head. In this terrible predicament the only relief that occurs to the helpless and perfectly imbecile victim is death. In deep despair he wanders into the Colosseum. Now we had forgotten to apprise the reader that the divine Theodora had made a compact with Lothair that if possible she would revisit him after she had quitted this world. Accordingly she now comes back to remind him of his promise never to go over to Rome. Her apparition is seen by him in the moonbeams, her voice warns him, he falls down insensible, and is picked up in such a state as to be altogether unrepresentable to the Holy Father; and the doctor, who is called in, starts him off for change of air to Palermo. By this admirable device is the wretched Lothair extricated from his perplexities, and from the Cardinal's clutches.

From Palermo he goes to Malta, where he meets our old friend Mr Phœbus, who has come there in his yacht Pan. That gentleman, having given our Commissioners

in Lunacy the slip, was on his way home to an island which he now inhabited "near the Asian coast of the *Ægean Sea*," and where he lived in great splendour, as "by his genius and fame he commanded a large income." "It was impossible," our author very justly remarks, "for Lothair in his present condition to have fallen upon a more suitable companion than Mr Phœbus." Madame Phœbus and her sister Euphrosyne were both at Malta, and "welcomed Lothair in maritime costumes, which were absolutely bewitching." They all sailed away to Mr Phœbus's island, when the artist welcomed his guest to "an Aryan clime, an Aryan landscape, and an Aryan race"—and where they frequently went hunting, on which occasions Mr Phœbus wore green velvet boots. Afterwards they all went to the Holy Land, where Euphrosyne "sniffed with her almond-shaped nostrils the all-pervading fragrance," and Mr Phœbus "scattered his gold like a great Seigneur of Gascony." Here they met St Aldegonde and Bertram, Corisande's brother, who fell in love with Euphrosyne; and a most extraordinary person, a Syrian named Paraclete, who was perhaps the only man living competent to hold a discourse with Mr Phœbus on the Aryan-Semitic question. Taking a ride one day with Mr Paraclete, Lothair meets his former commander, the most consummate soldier in Europe, who is now in the service of the Porte; and then suddenly our hero arrives at his own house in London. The first thing he did there was to summon Mr Ruby the jeweller, and to order him to make a crucifix with a figure of pure gold and a cross of choice emeralds, which he intends to offer to Miss Arundel as a wedding-present on her becoming the bride of the Church. How he again met with Corisande, who was believed to be engaged to the Duke of Brecon, though she was not—

how he saw Miss Arundel's picture in the Royal Academy—how he and Cardinal Grandison talked the most astonishing theological nonsense together—how the Cardinal wanted him to attend the *Œcumenical Council*—how Miss Arundel took the veil,—all this need not detain us from the final incident, which is, of course, the betrothal of Lothair to the Cynosure of the *Empyrean*. When it happened, he behaved in the following unaccountable manner: "He soothed and sustained her agitated frame, and sealed with an embrace her speechless form." We believe that a Mormon lady is said to be "sealed" to Brigham Young when that patriarch announces his intention of adding her to his seraglio; but whether any notion of this sort was in Lothair's mind, or whether he was merely performing on her speechless form the same operation which her cheek had formerly undergone, we know no more than we do why her frame was agitated while her form was speechless.

We will now cull a few more specimens from the wilderness of sweets which Mr Disraeli, as the reader of our extracts will already have perceived, has planted on the tomb of Lindley Murray.

The ladies are very loose in their grammar:—

"Who should lead her out on such an occasion than the nearest relation she has in the world?" asks Lady St Jerome.

Lady Corisande has "every confidence in Bertram."

"You have not suffered, I hope," says Lothair to Mrs Campian.

"Very little, and through your kindness," is the ambiguous reply.

"Except mamma, this is our first visit," said the Duchess.

Of Miss Arundel it is recorded that "Lothair danced with her, and never admired her more"—meaning not that he thenceforward admired her no more, but that his admiration had never been greater.

We hereby offer as a prize our

copy of 'Lothair' to any candidate who has passed the Civil Service examination, and who will parse for us the following sentence:—

"For though being a violent Protestant and of extreme Conservative opinions, her anti-Papal antipathies and her Italian predilections frequently involved her with acquaintances not so distinguished, as she deemed herself, for devotion to the cause of order and orthodoxy."

We hope the reader will like this next sentence also for its fine metaphorical ending:—

"All the ladies of the house were fond and fine horsewomen. The mount of one of these riding parties was magical. The dames and damsels vaulted on their barbs, and genets, and thoroughbred hacks, with such airy majesty; they were absolutely overwhelming with their bewildering habits and their bewitching hats."

But, next to the unrivalled passage about the speechless form, we, on the whole, prefer the following:—

"The Favonian breeze played on the brow of this beautiful hill; and the exquisite palm-trees, while they bowed their rustling heads, answered in responsive chorus to the antiphon of nature."

Hooray! Three cheers for the right honourable speaker! These extracts scarcely look as if they had been taken from a book, every sentence of which, as an enthusiastic reviewer assures us, is worth studying. They look rather as if the author had not found time to read over what he had written. To be sure, there may be reasons, besides want of time, why Mr Disraeli should not greatly care to re-peruse his own work.

We think the reader of our article will admit, that in this novel Mr Disraeli appears to be in very gracious fooling. Some eulogist has compared it to a fairy tale: it is such a fairy tale as might be composed by a madman in plush breeches. Why a once successful novelist and veteran political leader

should have employed his time in writing it, is a problem of which we can offer no other solution than that suggested at the beginning of this paper.

It is unnecessary to point out to those who remember the singular theories broached in Mr Disraeli's former novels, that the adventures of Lothair can scarcely be expected to end with the present third volume. It will easily be anticipated that a sequel still more remarkable than the commencement of that nobleman's history is in progress—in fact we may whisper that the same assistants have been secured for the future as for the present work—namely, the writer of the Drury Lane pantomimes, a gentleman on the staff of the 'Court Journal,' and a celebrated mad-doctor who is in the habit of making copious notes of the conversation of his patients. Nothing whatever is said in Lothair about the pre-eminence of the Jewish race, which formed so prominent a feature in a former work. In that preceding novel, it was shown that most of the illustrious people at that time existing were of Hebrew blood. But a whole generation of celebrities has sprung into distinction since. Mr Disraeli is not a man who abandons his ideas, and it still remains for him to do justice to those which he most fondly cherishes. Accordingly, in the continuation of Lothair a great many eminent persons of this time—such as Count Bismark, President Lopez, Generals Lee and Sherman, Messrs Blondin and Leonard, Herr Joachim, Madame Patti, M. Lesseps, and Mr Fechter—will be all proved to belong to the most illustrious of the tribes of Israel. The Emperor of the French, though a Jew, can only claim affinity with an inferior tribe; and Mr Gladstone, if a Jew at all, is of the posterity of Shimei who reviled David. The descent of the Rothschilds from the wealthy Israelite who supplied the

materials for the golden calf, is briefly but clearly traced through the money-changers who were driven out of the Temple. All this, however, is merely episodic to the continuation of Lothair's history. The struggle between the Protestant and Catholic friends of that hero for the possession of so important a proselyte which occurs in the present work, is only introductory to the far more important contest that is to take place in the sequel. The active and inquiring mind of Lothair has long occupied itself with the mysteries of the Jewish faith, and the Chief Rabbi is now his familiar friend. The Bishop, with his chaplain and trusty archdeacon, brings a strong counter-influence to work. And as when two of rival parties contest a seat, a candidate hostile to both may sometimes carry the election, so the astute Cardinal, ever on the watch, bears down at the head of his Monsignores on the devoted Lothair, who has already begun to talk of building a synagogue. The rival ecclesiastics are indefatigable in their efforts; the Rabbi endeavours to have the Passover kept at Muriel, while the Bishop presses sausage on Lothair at breakfast, and the Cardinal tries to entrap him into eating ham-sandwiches at lunch. A domestic circumstance renders the triple contest more exciting, for at this juncture the Cynosure of the Empyrean is confined of twins, and how they shall be baptised is a matter which is rightly judged to be of immense importance. The Bishop is perpetually dodging about the nursery, followed by his chaplain bearing a portable font. The Monsignores defeat his design by spreading a scandalous report that he and the chaplain are trying to make love to the nurses. The eighth day, so important in the rites of the Jewish Church, approaches. On the seventh night after the birth, the Cardinal seeks Lothair in great agitation, and makes the most

astonishing revelation. He has discovered in the family archives absolute proof that Lothair's grandfather, who is buried in the alabaster tomb, was his (the Cardinal's) father, and that, moreover, he was a Jew of the purest and noblest blood. Not only does the remorseful prelate abandon his attempt to convert Lothair to Romanism, but he announces his own intention to embrace the religion of Moses, deferring it only till he can go to Rome and try to bring the Pope over with him to the new creed. This decides the wavering Lothair, in spite of the tears and entreaties of the Lady Corisande. The next morning the twins, to the great disgust of the Bishop and the Duke's family, are duly admitted into the Hebrew community with all due ceremonies, and receive the names of Moses and Aaron. Both are also called Tussaud, after their grandmother. Lord Moses Tussaud Lothair, as he grows up, shows a princely prodigality of disposition, and attests the purity of his race by an early leaning towards Mosaic jewellery, and further by a proposal (which greatly exasperates his noble parent) to sell the gold railing of his great-grandfather's tomb. Lord Aaron, the younger twin, is of an intellectual and speculative turn of mind, and devotes himself to the establishment of one Church by the restoration, not of Christendom, but of Israel, and to the extrication of the Aryan races from Semitism by means of Art, of which he is himself a disciple, having an hereditary talent for modelling in wax. We will not reveal any more of this exciting work—the demand for which will doubtless be unparalleled—further than to note that it contains a remarkable peculiarity respecting the doctrines of the Hebrews; for, instead of treating the coming of the Jewish Messiah as prospective, it is hinted that he is now on earth, and has been for about sixty-five years.

We scarcely know whether to congratulate Mr Disraeli or not on the circumstance that everybody has read his work. Such popularity is doubtless gratifying, but, on the other hand, has its disadvantages. For instance, when next, in rising to address the House, he uncovers, the audience may perhaps fancy they hear a faint tinkle as of bells. We dread, too, the effect of a malicious opponent alluding to him as the right honourable member for Muriel. Perhaps before the end of the session it will be well for him to try and do what everybody else will by that time have done, and forget all about *Lothair*. On the whole, we would rather that Mr

Gladstone had written it. That gentleman's sombre genius would bear with advantage a little light edging of ridicule, and the works in which he has hitherto sought to relieve his plethora of words have been very far from amusing anybody. Possibly, however, his friends are better satisfied that the authorship should be where it is. But, besides the adherents of these eminent statesmen, there is a not inconsiderable third class in the country who believe that both of them are much more harmlessly employed in writing dull or foolish books than in pelting each other with fragments of the Constitution.

INDEX TO VOL. CVII.

- Abdul Ruhman, defeat of, by Shir Ali, 62.
- Acornati, the Marquis d', 698.
- ADMIRALTY, THE, 763.
- Adulteration, prevalence of, 488.
- Afghanistan, policy of Sir John Lawrence toward, 61 *et seq.*
- Agricultural labourers, their condition on the Continent compared with that at home, 23 *et seq.*—measures for its improvement, 28 *et seq.*
- Alexandria, sketches in, 374.
- AMERICA, WHITE, RED, BLACK, AND YELLOW IN, 314.
- Ammergau, the Passion-play at, 381.
- Animal life, picture of the world without, 531.
- Animals, the individualities of, 532—their destruction by man, 536 *et seq.*—growing humanity to them, 546.
- ANTAGONISM OF RACE AND COLOUR, THE, 314.
- Arab villages in Egypt, the, 88, 368—tournament, 102.
- Army, threatened changes in its patronage, &c., 259.
- ARMY REFORM, THE GOVERNMENT SCHEME OF, 489.
- Artisans, differences between their position and that of farm-labourers, 28, 30.
- AUSTEN, MISS, AND MISS MITFORD, 290.
- Austen, Miss, sketch of her life, 290 *et seq.*—her works, 295 *et seq.*, 299.
- Australia, Sir C. Dilke on, 229.
- Austria, wages, &c., of agricultural labourers in, 26—the emperor of, at the opening of the Suez Canal, 86—at the inauguration, 93—difficulties of, 242.
- Babington conspiracy, Queen Mary's connection with, 117.
- Barnard, Lady Anne, the statement of Lady Byron to her, 130.
- Bauer, M., his speech at the inauguration of the Suez Canal, 94.
- BAVARIA, THE PASSION-PLAY IN, 381.
- Belgium, wages, &c., of agricultural labourers in, 26—results of the system of small properties in, 33—sketches in, during the Waterloo campaign, 695.
- Berri, the Duc de, 697.
- Bitter Lakes, the, on the Suez Canal, 182.
- BLUE LAWS, 477—of Connecticut, the, 478—convictions under them, 481.
- Bracciano, the Duke of, 416.
- Broughton, Lord, his testimony on the Byron case, 133.
- Burglary, punishment of, by the Blue Laws, 480.
- BYRON, LORD, AND HIS CALUMNIATORS, 123—postscript to, 267.
- Byron, Lady, examination of her charges against her husband, 124 *et seq.*—her letters to Mrs Leigh, 129.
- Cail, M., the farming establishment of, 24.
- Cairo, railway from Suez to, 195—the Oriental Hotel, *ib.*—ball at the Kasr el Nilo, 196—sketches in, 357 *et seq.*
- Camara Mayor, the, in Spain, 417.
- Cardwell, Mr, his scheme of Army Reform, 489 *et seq.*
- Chalais, the Prince de, 416.
- Chalouf cutting, the, on the Suez Canal, 183, 184, 186.
- Chartley Manor, the removal of Queen Mary to, 115.
- CHATTERTON, 453—his parentage, *ib.*—early life, 454 *et seq.*—his first productions, 459—Catcott and Bargum, 461—Barrett the antiquary, 462—apprenticed to an attorney, 465—conduct of Horace Walpole, 470—his will, 472—removes to London, 473—his last days and death, 475.
- Child, Mr, his evidence on the Byron case, 136.
- Childers, Mr, as First Lord of the Admiralty, 763 *et seq.*
- Chinese, their position, &c., in the United States, 328 *et seq.*

- Church party, their position on the education question, 656 *et seq.*
- COMBES, M., 'LA PRINCESSE DES URSINS,' BY, reviewed, 415.
- COMEDY, ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF RHYMED VERSE IN, 264—prose the proper vehicle for, 75.
- COMING SESSION, THE, 250.
- Competitive examination system, the, in the United States, 22.
- Compulsory education, the cry for, 652 *et seq.*
- CONTINENT, THE FARMING AND PEASANTRY OF THE, 23.
- Co-operation, application of, to land, 36.
- Cottages for farm-labourers, improvement of, 29.
- Criticism, modern, 629.
- Dancing Dervishes, 180.
- Dassent's 'Annals of an Eventful Life,' 649.
- DEMOCRACY BEYOND THE SEAS, 220—results of, in the United States, 225 *et seq.*
- Difficult precept, the (O'Dowd), 603.
- DILKE, SIR C. W., HIS 'GREATER BRITAIN' reviewed, 220.
- Diplomatic Service, our (O'Dowd), 599.
- DIERAEL'S LOTHAIR, reviewed, 773.
- Dissenters, the, their demands as regards the Universities, 143 *et seq.*
- Dockyards, the reductions in the, 765 *et seq.*
- Dogs, the home for, 550.
- Dress, Blue Laws of New England on, 482.
- Drunkenness, its punishment by the Blue Laws, 479.
- Dull as Ditchwater (O'Dowd), 506.
- Dürer, Recent Lives, &c., of, reviewed, 630.
- EARL'S DENK, Part III., 1—Part IV., 161—Part V., 331—Part VI., 397—Part VII., 569—Part VIII., 667.
- EDUCATION DIFFICULTY, THE, 652.
- Education, how it may advantage the farm-labourer, 29 *et seq.*
- Egypt, enduring interest of, 90—moonlight in, 98.
- Egyptian army, the, 180.
- Elizabeth, Mr Froude's picture of, 105 *et seq.*, 108.
- Elizabeth, Princess of Parma, queen of Philip V., 432.
- England, the agricultural labourers in, compared with Continental, 23 *et seq.*—Blue Laws of the Puritans in, 477.
- English press, their tone on the Suez Canal, 182.
- Enlistment, proposed change in mode of, 493.
- Estrées, the Cardinal and Abbé d', 424.
- Etta!, the monastery of, 382.
- Eugenie, the Empress, her arrival and reception in Port Said, 91 *et seq.*—at the inauguration of the Canal, 93, 99.
- Europe, comparative absence of antagonism of race in, 314.
- FARMING AND PEASANTRY OF THE CONTINENT, THE, 23.
- Farming, foreign and English, 31—application of co-operation to, 36.
- Forster, Mr, his education measure, 654 *et seq.*
- France, condition of agricultural labourers in, 24—results of the system of small properties in, 33.
- Free-trade, grounds on which rejected by the United States, 221.
- Fresh-water canal at Ismailia, the, 100.
- FROUDE, MR, AND QUEEN MARY, 105.
- Gifford, Gilbert, his betrayal of Queen Mary, 115.
- Gladstone, Mr, and the prospects of the Session, 252 *et seq.*
- GOVERNMENT SCHEME OF ARMY REFORM, THE, 489.
- Grant, General, and the Red Indians, 318.
- 'GREATER BRITAIN,' review of, 220.
- Hainault, agricultural wages, &c., in, 26.
- Heaton, Mrs, her 'Life, &c., of Dürer' reviewed, 630.
- Hip, hip, hurrah! origin of, 186 note.
- Hobhouse, Sir J. C., his testimony on the Byron case, 133, 137.
- HOWARD'S 'FARMING AND PEASANTRY OF THE CONTINENT' reviewed, 23.
- India, results of the competitive examination system in, 223—sketches in, by Sir C. Dilke, 232 *et seq.*
- Indus, the valley of the, 233.
- IN FEBRUARY 1870, 376—A Valentine, 1570, *ib.*
- Inquisition, the measures of the Princesses des Ursins against, 424.
- Ireland, the policy of the Government toward, 258 *et seq.*
- Irish Land Bill, prospects of the Session regarding it, 250.
- IRONCLAD SHIPS, OUR, 706.
- Ismailia, sketches at, on the Suez Canal, 99, 100 *et seq.*—the ball at, 102.
- JOHN, Part III., 40—Part IV., 198—Part V., 269—Part VI., 434—Part VII., 609—Part VIII., 725.
- Joseph's Well at Cairo, 369.
- Khedivé, the reception on board his yacht, 90—his garden palace, 366.
- La Briche, farming and wages at, 24.
- Lady Grace, review of, 642.
- Lahore, the reception of Shir Ali at, 66.
- Lawrence, Sir John, his negotiations, &c., with Shir Ali, 61 *et seq.*

- Leigh, Mr Austen, his 'Life, &c., of Jane Austen,' 291 *et seq.*
- Leigh, Mrs, Mrs Stowe's calumnies against, 123 *et seq.*—her history and character, 127.
- Leaseps, M. de, at the inauguration of the Canal, 93, 95 *et seq.*
- Lindsay, Lord, on the Byron case, 133.
- Lion in old age, the, 545.
- LOTHAIR, review of, 773.
- Louis XIV., notices of, in connection with the Princesse des Ursins, 417, 418, *et seq. passim.*
- Ludlow, Roger, the Blue Laws compiled by, 478.
- Lushington, Dr, and the Byron case, 131.
- Lying, its punishment by the Blue Laws, 480.
- LYTTON, LORD, WALPOLE by, reviewed, 74—letter from, on the employment of rhymed verse in comedy, 264.
- Maintenon, Madame de, 417, 418, 419.
- Maories, Sir C. Dilke on the, 229.
- Marie Louise, wife of Philip V., connection of the Princesse des Ursins with, 419 *et seq.*
- Mary, Queen, Mr Froude's picture of, 105 *et seq.*—Walsingham's plot against her, 114 *et seq.*—the death-scene, 119.
- Mary's sycamore near Cairo, 372.
- Massachusetts, the Blue Laws of, 481.
- MAYO, LORD, AND THE UMBALLA DURBAR, 61.
- Mehemet Ali, the tomb of, 369.
- Menzaleh, Lake, the Suez Canal at, 89, 97.
- MERCER'S 'JOURNAL OF WATERLOO,' 694.
- Message of Peace, the (O'Dowd), 594.
- Mill, J. S., his advocacy of peasant-proprietorship, 31.
- Milne, Sir A., at the opening of the Suez Canal, 96.
- Ministerial organs, their tone as to the coming session, 250.
- Mitford, Miss, her parentage and early life, 290, 292 *et seq.*—her works, 296 *et seq.*, 306.
- Moles at Port Said, their construction, 89.
- Monkeys, the peculiarities of, 533.
- Montagu, the Marquise de, her Memoirs reviewed, 636.
- MONTALEMBERT, COUNT CHARLES DE, 522.
- 'Morning Post,' the, on the Suez Canal, 182 *note.*
- Morris's 'Earthly Paradise,' Part III., review of, 644.
- Naturalists, the cruelties of, 540.
- Negro, the, his position, &c., in the United States as regards the whites, 320 *et seq.*
- Negro question, Sir C. Dilke on, 224.
- NEW BOOKS, 628—Albrecht Dürer, 630—*the Marquise de Montagu*, 635—Smedley's *Poems*, 640—Morris's 'Earthly Paradise,' 644—novels and novelists, 647—'Wenderholme,' 649.
- New England, the Blue Laws of, 478.
- New Measures and Old Men (O'Dowd), 242.
- New Zealand, Sir C. Dilke on, 228 *et seq.*
- Nile, amount of its rise, 372.
- Nile ferry, scene at a, 362.
- Noailles, Madame de, 418.
- Noailles, the Baroness de, 'Memoirs of the Marquise de Montagu' by, reviewed, 635.
- Nonconformists, the, their demands as regards the Universities, 143 *et seq.*—their views on the education question, 656 *et seq.*
- North American Indians, how regarded by the whites, 315 *et seq.*—their present condition, &c., 318 *et seq.*
- Novels and novelists, 647.
- Ober-Ammergau, the Passion-play at, 381.
- O'Dowd, CORNELIUS—words without music, 237—who's afraid! 240—new measures and old men, 242—talk-gambits, 244—a small clerical error, 247—re-constructing the edifice, 379—the Tipperary answer, 499—on some rash investments, 501—dull as ditchwater, 504—a Protestant relief bill, 506—on sanding the sugar, 591—the message of peace, 594—the two safe careers, 596—our diplomatic service, 599—the difficult precept, 603—personal and peculiar, 605.
- On or Hierapolis, the ruins of, 371.
- OUR IRON-CLAD SHIPS, 706.
- OUR POOR RELATIONS, 531.
- Parliament, the coming Session of, 250 *et seq.*
- Parma, the Princess of, marriage of Philip V. to, 431 *et seq.*
- PASSION-PLAY IN THE HIGHLANDS OF BAVARIA, THE, 381.
- Paulet, Sir A., and Queen Mary, 115.
- Peasant-proprietors of Austria, the, state of their labourers, 26—Mr Mill and others on them, 31.
- Personal and Peculiar (O'Dowd), 605.
- Philip V. of Spain, connection of the Princesse des Ursins with, 417 *et seq.*
- Poor-law, the, its advantages to the agricultural labourers, 27.
- POOR RELATIONS, OUR, 531.
- Port Said, arrival at, and sketches in, 85, 95—the moles, 87.
- PROBLEM SOLVED, THE, 772.
- Protection, the system of, in the United States, 221.

- Protestant Relief Bill, a (O'Dowd), 506.
 Prussia, wages, &c., of agricultural labourers in, 25—the Crown Prince of, at the opening of the Suez Canal, 93—strength of her fleet, and danger from it, 769.
 Puritans, the, their sumptuary laws, 477.
 Pyramids, a visit to the, 361 *et seq.*, 364.
 RACE AND COLOUR, THE ANTAGONISM OF, 314.
 Radcliffe, Mr Delmé, his answer to the Stowe calumnies, 128.
 Raah Investments, on some (O'Dowd), 501.
 Reade, Charles, the novels of, 647.
 Reconstructing the Edifice (O'Dowd), 379.
 Red Indians, how regarded by the whites, 315 *et seq.*—their present state, &c., 318 *et seq.*
 Reed, Mr, his work on our ironclad ships reviewed, 706.
 Reformation, the, its effect as regards the Universities, 141, 142.
 Religion, the demand for its exclusion from the Universities, 142 *et seq.*
 Religious difficulty, the, in the education question, 655 *et seq.*
 Rhymed verse, inapplicable to comedy, 75.
 RHYMED VERSE IN COMEDY, ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF, 264.
 Richmond, the cemetery of, 224.
 Robinson, Admiral, as member of the Admiralty Board, 763.
 Rossa, O'Donovan, his election for Tipperary, 499.
 Sabbath observance, the modern agitation regarding, 483.
 Sanding the Sugar, on (O'Dowd), 591.
 'Saturday Review,' the, on the Suez Canal, 183 note.
 Scilla, Ruffo, the swindling scheme of, 501.
 Scott, W. B., his 'Life, &c., of Dürer' reviewed, 630.
 Secularists, their cry for compulsory education, 653 *et seq.*—their views on the subject, 655 *et seq.*
 Shir Ali, Amir of Afghanistan, his meeting with Lord Mayo at Umballa, circumstances which led to it, &c., 61 *et seq.*
 Slander, punishment of, by the Blue Laws, 480.
 Small Clerical Error, a (O'Dowd), 247.
 Small properties, Stuart Mill's advocacy of, 31—results of the system as shown in France, 33, 35—and in Belgium, 33 *et seq.*
 Small tenancies, advantages and disadvantages of, 37 *et seq.*
 Smedley, Miss, the Poems of, reviewed, 640.
 Smoking, punishment of, by the Blue Laws, 480.
 Sologne, the, agricultural wages, &c., in, 24.
 Southern States, Sir C. Dilke on, 224—on their present position, 225.
 Spain, influence of the Princesse des Ursins in, 421 *et seq.*
 'STATE, THE, THE POOR, AND THE COUNTRY,' 509.
 Stowe, Mrs, examination of her Byron calumnies, 123 *et seq.*, 267.
 Suez, arrival and sketches at, 187 *et seq.*
 SUEZ CANAL, THE OPENING OF THE—arrival, 85—Port Said, 87—reception in the Khedivé's yacht, 90—interest of Egypt, *ib. et seq.*—arrival of the French empress, 91—inauguration of the canal, 92—anticipations, 95—entrance into the canal, 97—a stoppage, 98—Lake Timseh and Ismailia, 99—the fresh-water canal, 100, 101—an Arab tournament, 102—the Khedivé's ball, *ib.* Part II.—Mental effect of Egypt, 179—the voyage continued, 180—a stoppage, *ib.*—the scenery, 181—tone of the English press, 182 and note—the Bitter Lakes, 182—a race, 183—forebodings, 184—a last dinner on board, 185—the Chalouf cutting, 186—arrival at Suez, 187—the works there, 188—the railway station, 189—prospects of the canal, 192 *et seq.*—approach to Cairo, 194—arrival there, 195—ball at the palace, 196. Part III.—A rude awaking, 352—sketches in Cairo, 357—the jewellers' quarters, 359—illuminations, 360—visit to the Pyramids, 361—a ferry on the Nile, 362—the Great Pyramid, 364—Cairo races, 367—the population, 368—the citadel, *ib.*—the mosques, 370—the bazaars, *ib.*—the ruins of Hierapolis, 371—the rise of the Nile, 372—sketches of Alexandria, 374—departure, 375.
 Sunday schools, importance, &c., of, 661.
 Swearing, punishment of, by the Blue Laws, 481.
 Talk-Gambits (O'Dowd), 244.
 Temple, Dr, on the upper and lower classes, 247.
 'Times,' the, on the Suez Canal, 183 note.
 Timseh, Lake, on the Suez Canal, 99.
 Tipperary Answer, the (O'Dowd), 499.
 Torcy, minister of Louis XIV., 418.
 Total abstinence, the agitation regarding, 483, 484 *et seq.*
 Touraine, agricultural wages, &c., in, 24.

- TRADE-UNIONS, 554—Part II., 744.
 Tremouille, Mademoiselle de la, afterwards Princesse des Ursins, sketch of her career, 415 *et seq.*
 Trollope, A., the novels of, 647.
 Tussoum, station of, on the Suez Canal, 181.
 Two Safe Careers, the (O'Dowd), 596.
 Umballa Durbar, history of it, the circumstances which led to it, &c., 61 *et seq.*
 United States, supremacy of protection in, 221—probabilities as to their continued union, 228 *et seq.*—present state of relations with the, 260—the antagonism of race and colour in, 314 *et seq.*
 Universities, movement within them regarding tests, 139—their origin, &c., 141—change at the Reformation, 142—the demand for excluding religion from them, *ib. et seq.*—views of the Nonconformists, 143 *et seq.*
 UNIVERSITY TESTS, 139.
 URSINS, THE PRINCESSE DES, 415.
 VALENTINE, A., 1570, 376.
 Vivisection, the cruelties of, 539.
 Voelcker, Dr, on Belgian agriculture, 34.
 'WALPOLE,' BY LORD LYTTON, review of, 74.
 Walsingham, his scheme for entrapping Queen Mary, 114 *et seq.*
 Waste lands, the improvement of, by tenant-farmers and peasant-proprietors, 37.
 Water, the supply of, to Port Said, 87.
 WATERLOO CAMPAIGN, MERCEUR'S JOURNAL OF THE, reviewed, 694—the battle of, 701.
 Wellington, notices of, during the Waterloo campaign, 695.
 'Wenderholme,' review of, 649.
 Who's afraid? (O'Dowd), 240.
 WILSON, DANIEL, 'CHATTERTON' by, reviewed, 453.
 Words without Music (O'Dowd), 237.
 Working classes, their present condition, &c., 259.
 Zin, the wilderness of, 98.



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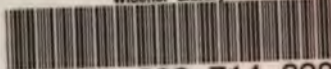
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